THE TRAVEL ISSUE

bon appétit

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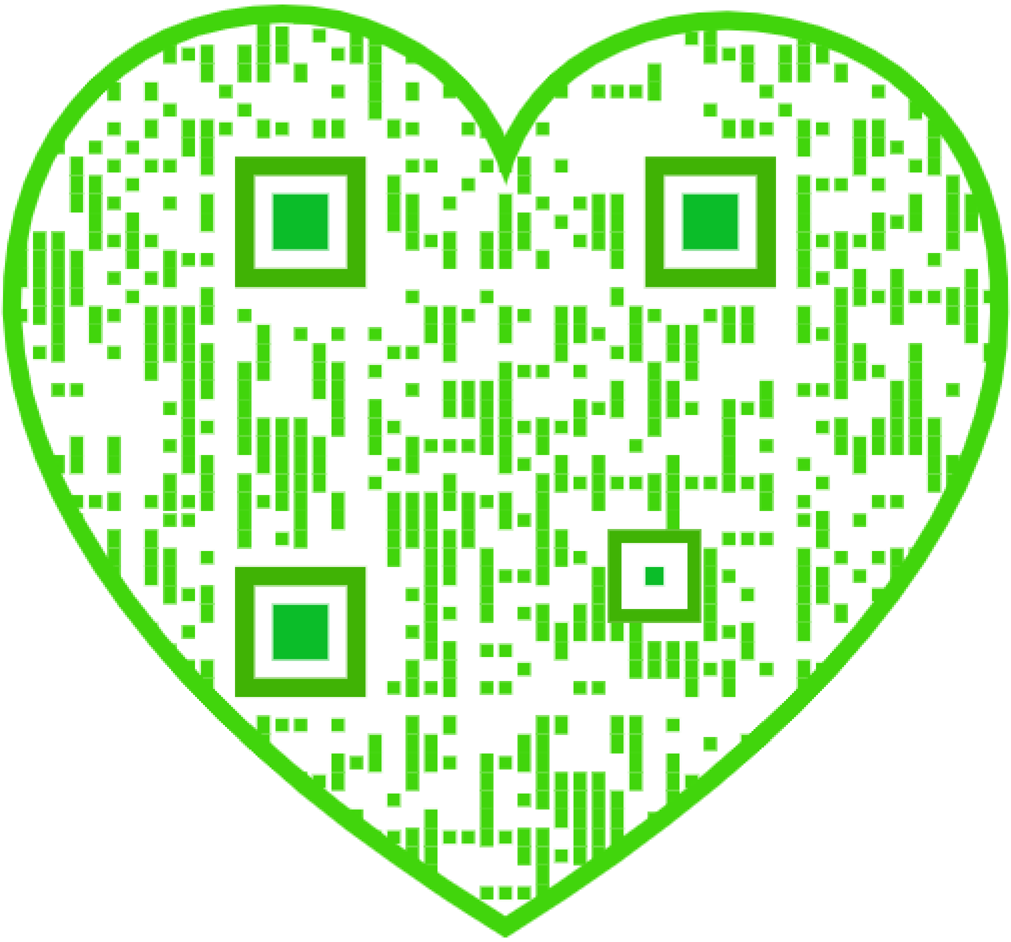


Savor the South: A SHE-CRAB SOUP JOURNEY

Warm your soul with the essence of the South's culinary legacy. This creamy, crab-rich delicacy is a Charleston classic, steeped in history and brimming with flavor. Whether you're a seasoned foodie or a curious traveler, let this Lowcountry treasure be your passport to indulgence.

A RECIPE WORTH EXPLORING. For a taste of the South at home, try your hand at the quintessential recipe. Featuring fresh Atlantic blue crab meat, a whisper of sherry, and a rich cream base infused with spices, it's a dish that brings the charm of Charleston to your table.

She-Crab Soup

Active: 15 min | Total: 25 min | Serves: 4

2 tablespoons butter, divided
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 cup milk
1 ½ cups half-and-half cream
4 teaspoons finely grated onion
¾ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
Salt and white pepper to taste
¼ teaspoon ground mace
¼ teaspoon red (cayenne) pepper
¼ teaspoon grated lemon zest
1 ½ pounds flaked blue crab meat
¼ cup crab roe*
3 tablespoons dry sherry
1 tablespoon finely chopped, fresh parsley leaves

1. In a large, heavy pot over low heat, melt butter, then add flour and blend until smooth.

2. Slowly add milk and half-and-half cream, stirring constantly with a whisk. Cook until thickened.

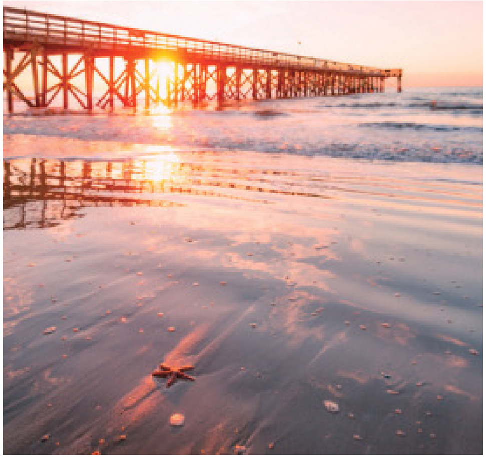
3. Add onion, Worcestershire sauce, salt, white pepper, mace, cayenne pepper and lemon zest. Bring just to a boil, stirring constantly.

4. Reduce heat to low, add crab meat and crab roe and simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes. (If the soup appears about to boil, remove the pan from the heat for a minute or so, then return.)

5. Remove from heat and add sherry, stirring to mix. Let rest for 3 to 4 minutes.

6. Pour the soup into individual heated soup bowls, dividing the crab meat and roe equally. Garnish with parsley and serve.

**Crab roe are the eggs harvested from the female blue crab. The addition of crab roe tints the soup orange and enriches its crabby flavor.*



EXPERIENCE SHE-CRAB SOUP WHERE IT TASTES BEST

in **Charleston, South Carolina**. Plan your culinary getaway now to explore the cobblestone streets, historic charm, and unforgettable flavors of the Lowcountry. Because in Charleston, every bowl of She-Crab soup is a celebration of Southern tradition.

Where to find the best-of-the-best: *82 Queen, Amen Street Fish & Raw Bar, Charleston Crab House, Fleet Landing, Hank's Seafood, Hyman's Seafood, Jasmine Porch at The Sanctuary, Magnolias, Middleton Place Restaurant, The Palmetto Cafe, Poogan's Porch, and Revival.*

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SCAN FOR YOUR
COMPLIMENTARY
VACATION GUIDE

Crème caramel with Armagnac-plumped prunes at London's Bouchon Racine. P.68

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RECIPE BY GABE BERGADO

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ON THE COVER
Sundarkala from Naar (p.50). Photograph by Ashish Shah

PHOTOGRAPH BY BOBBY BEASLEY

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The perfect day in San Antonio starts with breakfast tacos at Maria's Cafe. P. 11

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PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTOPHER LEE

In Maine, food is more than just a meal; it's a way of life. Each ingredient is a bold expression of land and sea. Each dish, a reflection of local chefs, farmers and fishers, working in tune with the seasons. Forge a deeper connection to nature, and to community, with every flavorful bite.

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Regent Seven Seas Cruises'® Chartreuse offers guests a contemporary twist on traditional French cuisine. This Parisian-inspired restaurant invites guests on a gastronomic journey with a menu that celebrates the art of French cuisine and redefines fine dining at sea.

A Modern Twist on French Cuisine: Chartreuse

Regent Seven Seas Cruises encourages guests to experience an immersive culinary adventure like no other aboard all its ships, but especially the luxurious *Seven Seas Grandeur®*, *Seven Seas Splendor®*, *Seven Seas Explorer®*, *Seven Seas Mariner®*, and *Seven Seas Voyager®*, all of which feature dining at Chartreuse. Among the exquisite restaurants offered onboard these world-class vessels, Chartreuse celebrates timeless French gastronomy with an inspired, modern twist.

From the moment they arrive at Chartreuse, guests feel transported to the heart of Paris. Sophisticated design and romantic lighting capture a distinct Parisian elegance that sets the tone for an unforgettable experience. Every seat in this beautiful restaurant affords breathtaking ocean views, making each meal not just a feast for the senses, but a visual spectacle.

A Culinary Journey Inspired by Tradition and Innovation

Chartreuse is the culmination of Regent Seven Seas Cruises' deep-rooted passion for French cuisine, blending classic recipes with innovative modern gastronomy. With travels to France's deeply rooted culinary heartlands, the menu honors the rich history of French cooking while pushing the boundaries of contemporary dining.

Vice president of hotel operations, Steph Armengol, played a pivotal role in bringing Chartreuse to life on Regent's newest vessel, *Seven Seas Grandeur*. Traveling back to his hometown of Port-la-Nouvelle, he and the Regent team immersed themselves in the region's culinary heritage, cooking alongside the esteemed three Michelin-starred chef Gilles Goujon and consulting with world-renowned winemaker Gérard Bertrand. This collaboration sparked the creation of imaginative new recipes and wine pairings that are now part of the onboard dining experience.

The Art of a Luxury Culinary Experience

At Chartreuse, craftsmanship and artistry are essential ingredients in each dish. The menu dazzles with dishes that combine the rich flavors of classic French cuisine with globally inspired surprises. Guests will start their meal with a modern take on traditional hors d'oeuvres like Escargots à l'Ail façon Chartreuse and Steak Tartare et Caviar, followed by indulgent mains such as Coquilles Saint-Jacques Poêlées et Chorizo or Filet de Canard aux Navets et Cerises. For dessert, the luxurious Crème Brûlée à la Vanille de Tahiti is a showstopping grand finale.

Chartreuse Restaurant offers a thoughtfully curated selection of exquisite, complimentary French wines to elevate your dining experience. To perfectly conclude your meal, indulge in a delightful range of digestives. Additionally, Regent features an exceptional collection of connoisseur wines, all at remarkably reasonable prices and exceptional value compared to traditional land-based establishments.

Epicurean Perfection: A Commitment to Excellence

At Regent, every detail is meticulously attended to, from each line on the menu to the outstanding service. The staff at Chartreuse provides unparalleled hospitality, ensuring that each guest feels like a true connoisseur of fine dining. With an unwavering commitment to culinary perfection, Chartreuse is a testament to Regent's dedication to extraordinary dining at sea.

Regent Seven Seas Cruises' world-class restaurants are just the start. The Epicurean Perfection program sets Regent apart, allowing guests to take immersive, once-in-a-lifetime culinary-focused shore excursions alongside onboard programs. Chef-led Epicurean Explorer tours invite travelers to discover local markets, kitchens, and restaurants, making each port of call an opportunity for discovery while connecting guests to the cultures they are visiting. Recent Epicurean Explorer tours have included chef-led market tours in Monte Carlo and foraging adventures in Corfu, Greece, followed by onboard cooking classes.

A Fleet of Exceptional Dining Experiences

In addition to Chartreuse, Regent's other fine dining venues promise a variety of exquisite flavors and gracious hospitality. Aboard Regent Cruises, there is no shortage of options to satisfy every palate. Diners can customize the perfect meal at Regent's largest specialty restaurant, Compass Rose, or savor classic American cuisine at the intimate steakhouse, Prime 7, or enjoy diverse Pan-Asian dishes at Pacific Rim. For an authentic Italian meal, Sette Mari at La Veranda serves an unforgettable feast every night. Casual dining options like the Pool Grill and in-suite dining extend additional flexibility and convenience for those seeking a more relaxed atmosphere.

Regent Seven Seas Cruises continues to redefine ultra-luxury travel with extraordinary dining experiences on each voyage. Chartreuse is a cornerstone of the culinary choices on board, where every meal becomes a transportive journey in taste, tradition, and innovation.

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From the Editor

Editor in chief Jamila Robinson shares what's on her mind this month

Destination dining: The Himalayas

For me, it's always the food—whether it's from a food truck or fine dining that widens my perspective and makes my vacations and work trips more memorable.

I like to scour the James Beard Awards semifinalists, which helps me plan road trips and side trips, imploring me to check out a nearby town just to try a café or a bakery. The 50 Best Restaurants lists in Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East encourage diners to visit cities within those regions for exceptional dining experiences. Even Bon Appétit's very own Best New Restaurants list is a helpful guide for great places to eat throughout the US.

In the last few months,I ate shawarma after landing in Abu Dhabi that was tender with fresh, crunchy pickles. I slurped ramen on my favorite street in Paris. And recently, I took a cable car to the top of a mountain in Bogotá, Colombia, for chicken soup with beans served in a Styrofoam bowl.

My appreciation for these dishes sits right along the mind-bending tasting menus I had at Lasai in Rio de Janeiro and Kasama in Chicago, which are among the world's finest restaurants.

Destination dining is a form of entertainment, where the restaurant visit brings as much magic as traveling for a Taylor Swift or Beyoncé concert or staging a selfie in front of a landmark.

Restaurants and cafés are among the first lines of cultural exchange, where diners can experience cuisines in different contexts with new interpretations.

Throughout this month's Travel Issue we explore the global influences on food and drink, such as the rise of gin distilleries in places like Kenya and Vietnam.

On page 86 restaurant editor Elazar Sontag has curated a list of can't-miss pizza spots that highlight the evolution of the dish in the US. We also visit London for a redefined guide to British flavors and dining. And in San Antonio our contributor mixes English and Spanish when ordering the best breakfast taco. We also take you to Naar, a restaurant in the Himalayan foothills that is part of a global trend of luxury dining in the clouds.

Of course, we always bring what we learned back to the kitchen. On page 58 we have recipes to make from all those culinary souvenirs.

PHOTOGRAPH BY TRAVIS RAINEY (PORTRAIT)

Hotels With Good Tastes

PARIS
The Bristol hotel has several ateliers who make treasures you can add to your pantry, including flour milled on-site, fresh pasta, and customizable chocolates.

BOGOTÁ
Four Seasons Casa Medina Bogotá is a colonial era hotel with a chic speakeasy hidden on the second floor that focuses on whiskey. Order the Boulevardier.

ATLANTA
Atlas, a new American restaurant inside the St. Regis hotel, is among the city's best. It has an exquisite art collection where you can dine under a Picasso.

LONDON
China Tang, the Cantonese restaurant inside The Dorchester hotel, has one of the most sought-after reservations for dim sum. Don't miss the morel dumplings.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ASHISH SHAH

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TEST KITCHEN
TIPS, RECIPES, *and*
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Table Talk

RESTAURANTS,
TRAVEL, *and* FOOD
FOR THOUGHT

At Con Huevos Tacos, the tortillas are practically translucent. (p.14)

TASTE OF THE TOWN: SAN ANTONIO BREAKFAST TACOS

Also, winning weeknight dinners, chicharron-crusted chicken, and a rustic Spanish stew to wow a crowd.

The Most Important Taco of the Day

No place does breakfast tacos quite like San Antonio, where homemade flour tortillas are loaded with sustenance and flavor. These are longtime local critic **Edmund Tijerina**'s favorites.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER LEE

CON HUEVOS TACOS
OPEN
TACO CHRONICLES
CROSS THE BORDER
NETFLIX

Con Huevos Tacos blends Northern Mexican cooking and San Antonio staples.

Every morning taquerias throughout San Antonio fill with construction workers, nurses in scrubs, college students, and hurried families, all finding salvation in an iconic staple: the breakfast taco. No dish cuts across income, class, and geography quite like this combination of Mexican and American culture. The dish represents the best of the city, nestled in a warm tortilla.

People have been combining breakfast ingredients and fresh tortillas in Northern Mexico and the Rio Grande Valley since at least the early 1900s. Today, breakfast tacos are enmeshed in the fabric of Texas.

As anybody who has spent time in San Antonio can attest, the city is home to some of the best in the state, with a style all our own. Much like a proper Neapolitan pizza lives or dies by its crust, great breakfast tacos depend on the quality of the tortilla. A proper San Antonio flour tortilla is sturdy, flaky, and—most importantly—handmade, as they are at each of the restaurants on this list.

You'll find some combination of the same fillings—bacon, eggs, potato, chorizo, beans, and cheese—at almost every restaurant. Some also feature country sausage, diced weenies, and chicharrones stewed in luscious salsas. It's the quality of these ingredients and how they're prepared that can turn breakfast into a religious experience. Little touches at the best spots, like the chorizo chopped and carefully scrambled into the eggs at Little Taco Factory, show care and attention to detail.

These eight purveyors stand out for subtle flourishes that jump-start a perfect day.

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EL MILAGRITO CAFÉ

521 E. Woodlawn Ave.

Most taquerias serve barbacoa only on weekends, a testament to the time and attention the dish requires. El Milagrito serves it every day until they close or run out, and it's always outstanding. At the restaurant, open and buzzing with customers since 1969, cooks combine a mixture of beef cheeks and meat from the head, wrap it in a maguey leaf, place a cow tongue on top, and steam it (the tongue is served separately). The maguey imparts a subtly vegetal flavor, and cooks reserve just enough fat so that each bite of meat is unctuous. Some diners order a barbacoa plate and assemble their own meal, while others prefer to have the tender meat packed into tacos by El Milagrito's seasoned cooks. Either way, enjoy a side of potatoes cooked in red-tinged chorizo fat and shower each bite with a squeeze of fresh lime.

MARIA'S CAFE

1105 Nogalitos St.

Maria Beza opened her snug taqueria in 1989, and her creative offerings established her namesake café as a neighborhood favorite. Here, you'll find the Puffchilada, a puffy taco stuffed with a cheese enchilada, and the Taco Ondo, blending potato, egg, bacon, carne guisada gravy, and shredded yellow cheese. Outside, Maria's husband, Tom, smokes a mean brisket that graces many of the best dishes. Try the Big Joe's Taco, with chorizo, egg, bacon, brisket, cheese, and bright pico de gallo. For something a bit leaner, go for the El Mayor, a tribute to Mayor Ron Nirenberg (a one-time bodybuilder who keeps in impressive shape) with eggs, beans, and serrano chiles on a corn tortilla. A sign describing the mayor's namesake taco is tacked onto a corkboard alongside his autograph and a note proclaiming "Viva Maria!"

CON HUEVOS TACOS

1629 E. Houston St.

Chef Hugo Garcia opened Con Huevos Tacos in 2019 to honor the home cooking he grew up on in the Northern Mexican state of Tamaulipas. Garcia makes the thin flour tortillas of his home region to cradle classic and inspired fillings. Specialty breakfast tacos are named after important women in the chef's life, such as the Carmen (a combination of potato, scrambled egg, melty shredded cheddar, avocado, and cilantro). He loads others with seasonal fillings such as cactus and sautéed calabaza squash. If your hunger extends beyond breakfast tacos, do not miss the quesadilla de deshebrada de res, an open-face fresh corn tortilla filled with tender, slightly spicy shredded beef, melted Oaxaca cheese, and bright cabbage slaw topped off with a drizzle of crema.

TACO HOUSE

6307 San Pedro Ave.

Located between downtown and the San Antonio International Airport in a turquoise-trimmed midcentury building, Taco House is the ideal stop for a fix before you leave the city or right when you return. Second-generation owner Rose Leinen maintains the recipes and standards she inherited from her mother, Rose Mary Harper, who opened the restaurant in 1992. Although customers rave about the cheese enchiladas and puffy tacos, the breakfast taco lineup is what makes this place stand out. When Taco House had its 30th anniversary, a new bean and cheese taco toasted on a flattop grill was introduced to the menu, becoming an instant classic. The crispness of the flour tortilla is a perfect foil to the oozing cheese and rich refried beans.

MENDEZ CAFE

201 Bartholomew Ave.

This snug restaurant next to a West Side thoroughfare is an easy-to-miss destination for one of the city's best breakfasts. Since 1986, Dolores and Lupe Mendez have been delighting South Siders with soul-satisfying breakfast tacos and other early-morning staples like huevos rancheros. If you only have space for one taco, make it the carne guisada. The flavorful beef chunks in a spicy gravy are tender but not mushy, and while many South Side natives swear by adding cheese, the meat needs no adornment. Don't sweat the choice; you can't go wrong.

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LEFT: *Breakfast is best enjoyed well-doused in Con Huevos Tacos' bright salsa.* RIGHT: *Mendez Cafe's champion of the flattop.*

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LEFT: *Savvy commuters know to start the day at Original Donut Shop.* RIGHT: *A hit of freshness at Con Huevos Tacos.*

TALK THE TALK

A well-practiced mix of English and Spanish will get you far at taquerias across San Antonio. Although whoever takes your order will likely speak English, try giving your order with a bit of Spanish, starting with a friendly "Buenos días." One quirk of this culture-blending dish is that even native Spanish speakers tend to switch to English to specify their taco preference. "Un bacon and egg, por favor."

LITTLE TACO FACTORY

1510 McCullough Ave.

A chorizo and egg taco is simple, but the combination is tricky to get right. The chorizo is often greasy while the egg is prone to becoming rubbery. The Little Taco Factory's version is a masterclass. Owner Maria Rodriguez takes the time to drain the chorizo and mix the crumbles while cooking the egg so the filling is evenly seasoned. The Rodriguez family has honed their technique since 1970, drawing diners from downtown and the surrounding neighborhood for tacos, gooey yellow cheese enchiladas, and loaded combo plates. Expect to order your breakfast to go because there are only a handful of tables in the tiny dining room.

ORIGINAL DONUT SHOP

3307 Fredericksburg Rd.

Cars pack the two drive-through lanes most mornings at this institution that has served the Northwest Side since 1954. One lane is labeled "tacos," and the other "donuts." Though the apple fritter is award-worthy, the breakfast tacos are the main attraction. Fresh tortillas are rolled out in view of the dining room, and señoras scoop fillings from a steam table and wrap the tacos in aluminum foil to order. The chorizo and potato taco is a delight, featuring chunks of potato rich with spicy pork fat and bits of salty meat. Staff chat in Spanish during the occasional lull between rushes and fresh tortillas perfume the air, making the space feel like a friend's dining room.

YATZIL

502 S Zarzamora St.

There's a bit of neighborly debate surrounding the proper preparation of chilaquiles. The San Antonio approach is to mix tortilla chips with pico de gallo and scrambled eggs, while the version popular south of the border prefers tortilla chips or strips cooked in salsa and topped with queso fresco and crema. Yatzil's breakfast taco is something of a culinary handshake. The chori-quiles taco combines Mexican chilaquiles in a gently spicy salsa roja with chorizo, scrambled egg, and a flurry of white cheese. It's all wrapped in an almost buttery flour tortilla. Whichever style you might prefer, you'll be right at home at Yatzil.

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Dinner Is Served

Sweet and tangy sheet-pan chicken thighs, ultra-creamy caramelized onion pasta, and more meals to celebrate the cozier side of spring

ONE-POT FRENCH ONION PASTA

All the savory-sweet flavor of the iconic soup is captured in this baked pasta. Loaded with a wealth of caramelized onions, white wine, and fresh thyme, this recipe even allows for cooking the pasta right into the soupy base before topping with plenty of Gruyère and broiling.

RECIPE BY JESSE SZEWCZYK

4–6 SERVINGS

3	Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
4	large onions, thinly sliced
2	tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
1	tsp. freshly ground pepper, plus more
6	garlic cloves, finely chopped
4	tsp. chopped thyme
¾	cup dry white wine
1	lb. lumache (snail shells) or other medium shell pasta
1	oz. Parmesan, finely grated (about ½ cup)
5	Tbsp. unsalted butter
1	Tbsp. Dijon mustard
2	tsp. sugar
2	tsp. Worcestershire sauce
8	oz. Gruyère, coarsely grated (about 2 cups)
	Thinly sliced chives (for serving; optional)

1. Heat oil in a large high-sided ovenproof skillet or low-sided heavy pot over medium-high. Add onions, a pinch of salt, and a pinch of pepper and cook, stirring occasionally and adding 1 Tbsp. water and scraping bottom of pan any time onions are starting to burn, until onions are deep mahogany and jammy, 30–35 minutes.

2. Add garlic and thyme to pan and cook, stirring often, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add wine and cook, stirring occasionally, until reduced by half, about 3 minutes. Add 5½ cups water and bring to a simmer. Add pasta and cook, stirring often to prevent pasta from sticking to bottom of pan, until almost all of the liquid has been absorbed, a thick sauce has formed, and pasta is al dente, 10–14 minutes.

3. Remove pan from heat and add Parmesan, butter, Dijon mustard, sugar, Worcestershire sauce, remaining 2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, and remaining 1 tsp. pepper and stir until Parmesan is melted.

4. Place a rack in upper third of oven; heat broiler. Scatter Gruyère over pasta and broil until melted and golden brown in spots, 2–5 minutes, depending on your broiler.

5. If using chives, scatter over pasta just before serving.

PHOTOGRAPH BY TRAVIS RAINEY. FOOD STYLING BY KAITLIN WAYNE.

ROASTED TOFU GRAIN BOWLS WITH MISO-TAHINI SAUCE

This bowl has it all. Mixed grains (quinoa and brown rice) create a hearty base for roasted tofu and broccolini, creamy avocado, a bright cabbage slaw, and an earthy dressing made with miso, tahini, and turmeric.

RECIPE BY KENDRA VACULIN

4 SERVINGS

1	cup brown rice, rinsed until water runs mostly clear
¼	cup quinoa
½	small head of red cabbage (about 12 oz.), very thinly sliced
6	Tbsp. white wine vinegar, apple cider vinegar, or unseasoned rice vinegar, divided
2	tsp. plus 1 Tbsp. honey
1	tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
1	14-oz. package extra-firm tofu, patted dry, cut into 1" cubes
1	Tbsp. soy sauce
6	Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided, plus more for drizzling
1	bunch broccolini, cut into florets with long stems
½	tsp. crushed red pepper flakes, plus more
¼	cup miso
3	Tbsp. tahini
¾	tsp. ground turmeric
1	avocado, thinly sliced

1. Preheat oven to 450°. Bring rice, quinoa, and 2½ cups water to a boil in a medium saucepan. Cover tightly with a lid, reduce heat to low, and cook until tender and liquid is absorbed, about 40 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, combine cabbage, 3 Tbsp. vinegar, 2 tsp. honey, and 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt in a large bowl and vigorously massage with your hands to coat and tenderize cabbage. Set aside.

3. Arrange tofu on a rimmed baking sheet, drizzle soy sauce and 3 Tbsp. oil over, and toss to coat. Scoot to one side and roast until lightly browned, 9–11 minutes.

4. While the tofu is roasting, place broccolini in a medium bowl. Drizzle with oil, then sprinkle in ½ tsp. red pepper flakes and season with salt. Toss to coat.

5. Toss tofu, then arrange broccolini on other side of baking sheet. Roast until tofu is browned and crisp in spots and broccolini is tender and starting to char in spots, 12–15 minutes.

6. Whisk miso, tahini, turmeric, remaining 3 Tbsp. oil, 3 Tbsp. vinegar, and 1 Tbsp. honey in a medium bowl. Add water 1 tsp. at a time, whisking constantly, until dressing is loose enough to drizzle.

7. Assemble bowls with grains, tofu, broccolini, avocado, and reserved cabbage. Drizzle dressing over and top with more red pepper flakes.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ELLIOTT JEROME BROWN JR. FOOD STLYING BY TANEKA MORRIS. PROP STYLING BY GERRI WILLIAMS.

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SHEET-PAN POMEGRANATE CHICKEN WITH WALNUT RELISH

This dish is inspired by fesenjan, a sweet-and-sour Persian stew featuring pomegranate and walnuts. Roasting and broiling instead of braising the chicken speeds things up.

RECIPE BY KENDRA VACULIN

4 SERVINGS

- 1½ lb. skinless, boneless chicken thighs (about 6), patted dry
- 6 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- ½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
- Freshly ground pepper
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- ¼ cup pomegranate molasses
- 3 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 cup raw walnuts
- 1 garlic clove, finely grated
- ½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 large scallion, thinly sliced on a diagonal
- ¼ cup (packed) mint leaves, large leaves torn
- Pomegranate seeds (for serving)

1. Place a rack in upper third of oven and preheat to 425°. Place chicken in a large bowl. Drizzle 1 Tbsp. oil over, season with salt and pepper, and toss to coat.

2. Whisk vinegar, pomegranate molasses, Worcestershire sauce, and cumin in a small saucepan. Drizzle 3 Tbsp. over chicken; toss to coat. Stir a pinch of salt into remaining sauce in pan; set aside.

3. Arrange chicken on a rimmed baking sheet and roast until lightly browned, 13–16 minutes. Remove from oven.

4. Meanwhile, toast walnuts in a single layer on another rimmed baking sheet, stirring once, until golden brown, 5–8 minutes. Remove from oven.

5. Set reserved sauce in pan over medium-high heat and cook, stirring occasionally, until thick and syrupy, about 5 minutes.

6. Heat broiler. Brush chicken with sauce, then broil until cooked through and deeply browned and blistered in spots, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and brush with more sauce.

7. Coarsely chop walnuts and transfer to a medium bowl. Add garlic, red pepper flakes, ½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, and remaining 5 Tbsp. oil and mix to combine walnut relish.

8. Transfer chicken to a platter and spoon walnut relish over. Scatter scallion, mint, and some pomegranate seeds on top.

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COD WITH CHORIZO, GREENS, AND CHICKPEAS

In this one-pan dinner, cod is seared, then simmered in a chorizo-spiked sauce alongside wilted greens and chickpeas. Finishing lean, flaky fish in liquid ensures gentle cooking—nothing rubbery or overdone here!

RECIPE BY KENDRA VACULIN

6 SERVINGS

⅓	cup all-purpose flour
1–1½	lb. skinless cod fillet, cut into 2–4 pieces, patted dry
	Kosher salt, freshly ground pepper
2	Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1	15.5-oz. can chickpeas, rinsed, divided
4	oz. smoked Spanish chorizo, casing removed if needed, cut into very small pieces
5	garlic cloves, thinly sliced
2	Tbsp. sherry vinegar or red wine vinegar
2	Tbsp. tomato paste
¼	tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
1	medium bunch kale, ribs and stems removed, leaves torn into large pieces (about 4 cups)
2	Tbsp. unsalted butter

1. Place flour in a shallow bowl. Season cod on both sides with salt and black pepper, then press one side into flour to coat and tap off excess.

2. Heat oil in a medium high-sided skillet over medium-high. Cook ½ cup chickpeas, tossing often, until crisp, about 3 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to a small bowl; season with salt.

3. Reduce heat to medium. Cook cod, flour side down, in oil left in pan until light golden underneath, about 3 minutes. Transfer to a plate and arrange browned side up.

4. Cook chorizo in same pan, stirring often, until oil is red and chorizo is starting to crisp, about 1 minute. Add garlic and cook, stirring often, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add vinegar, tomato paste, and red pepper flakes and cook, stirring often, until combined about 1 minute. Add kale and stir to coat, then add butter, remaining chickpeas, a pinch of salt, and 1 cup water. Cook, tossing often, until kale is wilted, about 3 minutes.

5. Arrange cod, browned side up, in pan; simmer, spooning sauce over, until cooked through, about 3 minutes. Top with crisped chickpeas and season with black pepper.

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Return to Oz

Australian wine's presence and reputation in the US is a story of boom and bust

BY CHRISTINA PICKARD ■ PHOTOGRAPHS BY TRAVIS RAINEY

Winemakers like Delinquente are leading a new era of wine.

Between 1990 and 2004 the volume of Aussie wine exported to the US exploded, from around 550,000 annual cases to a whopping 20 million, led by "critter" wine brand Yellow Tail and its many cheap and cheerful companions—as well as pricier balls-to-the-wall reds like Mollydooker.

The latter were showered with lofty point scores by renowned American critics of the time, who had a penchant for "bigger is better" wine styles that rarely lived up to the hype. Soon Aussie critter wines—popular wine labels depicting cute animals—had competition from elsewhere in the world and a price war ensued, which Australia couldn't win. Worth about $718 million at its peak in 2007, Aussie wines sales now account for just $202 million in the US.

However, thanks to a small but mighty group of passionate specialist importers, there are more interesting and delicious Australian wines on American shores than ever before. Australia boasts some of the world's oldest vines and wines; generally very good farming practices; living wages and fair conditions for vineyard workers; and a breadth of wines from over 160 varieties to suit all palates.

Australian bottles fall somewhere in the middle of the price spectrum (relatively reasonable when taking into account the country's steep production and labor costs). At retail, most worth drinking cost upward of $20; a good deal of small-batch, thoughtfully farmed wines come in between $25 to $35, while premium cellar-worthy bottles may set you back anywhere from $50 to $200 a pop. Compared to the eye-watering price tags of similar fine wines in more coveted French and California regions, they're a bargain. Bonus: The vast majority of Aussie wines are sealed with screw caps, regardless of price, which equals consistency, longer aging, and zero risk of cork taint.

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REIGNITE YOUR LOVE FOR ALL THINGS AUSSIE, STARTING WITH THESE 10 WINES

1. 2023 Vasse Felix Filius Chardonnay, Margaret River, Western Australia, $28
Chardonnay is one of Australia's unsung heroes, striking a balance between age-worthiness and margarita-like drinkability. Few regions do Chardy like Margaret River, where proximity to the Indian Ocean provides crackling acidity, and abundant sunshine equals generosity of fruit. From the region's oldest producer, Filius comforts like a favorite T-shirt, with flavors of bright, fleshy lime, flower blossom, nougat, and seashells. Expect a whisper of toasty oak and cream.

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1.

2. 2022 Giant Steps Applejack Pinot Noir, Yarra Valley, Victoria, $90
Australians take Pinot Noir very seriously, particularly in cool climate regions like the Yarra Valley. Giant Steps is highly lauded, and thanks to American ownership, a fair amount is exported Stateside. Aussie Pinots are generally fruity and light-to-medium bodied, but the best, like Applejack, offer layers of other flavors, along with cat's-tongue-soft tannins, that are food-friendly now. If you're looking to collect age-worthy pours, Giant Steps is a good place to start.

3. 2022 Unico Zelo Esoterico skin contact white blend, Riverland and Clare Valley, South Australia, $28
If skin-contact whites, a.k.a. orange wines, are your bag, pour this wine in your glass, pronto. A blend of aromatic varieties, it's naturally made (sans funk) by highly ethical winemakers and is a low-alcohol 10.5% to boot. It tastes of musky botanic notes of flowers, ginger, honeycomb, and candied citrus with just enough of pithy tannin for a pleasant grip in the mouth.

4. 2018 Syrahmi XV Shiraz, Heathcote, Victoria, $60
One of Victoria's many excellent under-the-radar wine regions, Heathcote's dramatic, boulder-strewn landscape is virtually prehistoric. The area is known for powerful yet fresh perfumed Shiraz, and this is a top example. Think berry cordial, dried violet, mint, and baking spice aromas with chiseled, powdery tannins with a Goldilocks weight—not too heavy, not too light. It's a far cry from the overblown Shiraz of the past.

5. 2023 Dr. Edge Tyrannosaurus Dredge Pinot Meunier, Tasmania, $44
Peter Dredge is an Aussie wine rock star, and Tasmania is one of the nation's coolest—both literally and figuratively—regions, famed for top-notch sparkling wine and Pinot Noir. This Pinot Meunier (the lesser known of the Champagne grape varieties) may be a rare bird, but stylistically it exemplifies the "new" Australia, with a pop of berry fruit, florals, and spice amid a satiny, fresh palate. The perfect chillable red.

6. 2022 Delinquente Hell Nero d'Avola, Riverland, South Australia, $30
In a region as hot as Riverland, drought-tolerant Southern Italian varieties like Nero d'Avola thrive. Many winemakers, like Con-Greg Grigoriou of Delinquente, believe these varieties are the future of the country's warmest wine regions. This bottle is part of a colorful range that exemplifies this shift. Remarkably vivacious, it evokes wild Aussie springtime flowers, blueberry and rhubarb crumble, and savory spice.

6.

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7. 2022 Harkham Aziza Sémillon, Hunter Valley, New South Wales, $40
Hunter Valley has been making unique, long-lived Sémillon for nearly 200 years. Harkham's version is made in a natural, zero-sulfur-added vein, so it walks to its own beat. Wild but not funky thanks to a palate of wildflowers, beeswax, lemon balm, and hay, it's waxy-textured with a ping of pithy, lemony acidity. Plus, it's just 10.7% alcohol and keeps improving days after opening.

8. 2023 Ochota Barrels The Price of Silence Gamay, Adelaide Hills, South Australia, $60
Adelaide Hills was ground zero for the country's natural wine movement, home to a plethora of creative small-batch producers like winemaker Taras Ochota, who led the charge. After his untimely death in 2020, his wife, Amber, took the reins, and wine quality hasn't suffered. Like everything in the Ochota range, this Gamay is fresh and perfumed, evocative of site and variety.

9. 2022 Thistledown The Vagabond Old Vine Grenache, McLaren Vale, South Australia, $58
If you find Shiraz too rich, then mid-weight Grenache is a step in the lighter direction. McLaren Vale is the variety's spiritual home Down Under, with gnarly old vines and producers like Thistledown skilled at coaxing out Grenache's plump berry, floral, and white pepper perfume and satiny texture.

10. 2023 Grosset Springvale Riesling, Clare Valley, South Australia, $38
Clare Valley and Riesling go together like cats and naps. The Aussie style is typically bone-dry with rapier-sharp acidity, chalk-dust texture, and delicate citrus and floral flavors. This version, from arguably Australia's most renowned Riesling producers, is exemplary. It could age for decades, but is beautiful now, especially for the acid hounds among us.

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Since printing our first issue in 1956, *Bon Appétit* has published tens of thousands of recipes. It would take literal decades to cook them all. So our editors handpicked the 56 recipes you must make this year, from weeknight-ready meatballs to an instant-classic chocolate cake. You can find the entire collection on our website by scanning the QR code below, and we'll be highlighting a staff favorite each month in print. Let's cook!

PHOTOGRAPH BY ISA ZAPATA

GORGEOUS GREEN SHRIMP

WHY WE LOVE IT

When I was visiting my parents recently, my mom requested that I cook a dinner using up some scallions and cilantro on the precipice of wilting. How serendipitous that a recipe beloved by readers and staff alike—Kendra Vaculin's Gorgeous Green Shrimp—exists. With a quick whirl in the blender, the tender herbs, plus jalapeño, olive oil, lemon juice, and garlic, produce a verdant, mildly spicy sauce that blankets a pile of seared shrimp. A drizzle of yogurt, equal parts striking, tangy, and cooling, tempers the sharper flavors. The meal got two thumbs-up from my mom, and I got points for clearing out the fridge. A win all around. *—Li Goldstein*

4 SERVINGS

1	baguette, sliced on a diagonal 1" thick
5	Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided, plus more for drizzling
1½	lb. large shrimp, peeled, deveined, tails left on if desired
¾	tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
	Freshly ground pepper
1	bunch cilantro, coarsely chopped
8	scallions, coarsely chopped
1	jalapeño, ribs and seeds removed if desired
4	garlic cloves
3	Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
3	Tbsp. unsalted butter, divided
¼	cup plain whole-milk yogurt

Preheat broiler. Arrange bread on a baking sheet and drizzle with oil. Broil until toasted and charred in spots, about 2 minutes. Set toast aside.

Pat shrimp dry with paper towels; season lightly with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Purée cilantro, scallions, jalapeño, garlic, lemon juice, 3 Tbsp. oil, ¾ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, and 3 Tbsp. water in a blender until sauce is very smooth.

Heat 1 Tbsp. butter and remaining 2 Tbsp. oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Arrange reserved shrimp in pan in a single layer and cook, undisturbed, until lightly browned underneath, about 2 minutes. Add remaining 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter and cook, tossing often, until shrimp are just cooked through, about 1 minute. Remove from heat and pour green sauce over; toss to combine.

Whisk yogurt and a drizzle of water in a small bowl to loosen; season with salt. Drizzle yogurt sauce over shrimp in pan and season with more pepper. Serve shrimp with toast on the side.

FOOD STYLING BY THU BUSER. PROP STYLING BY CHRISTINA ALLEN.

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THE TAKEAWAY

Offer "security blanket" foods when introducing new flavors. Having something familiar on the table can help kiddos feel more in control and adventurous.

Braver Bites

To get their toddler eating more adventurously, chef **Calvin Eng** and cookbook coauthor **Phoebe Melnick** keep familiar foods within reach

PHOTOGRAPH BY ELLIOTT JEROME BROWN JR.

One month after Calvin opened his Cantonese American restaurant, Bonnie's, in Brooklyn, we found out I was pregnant. We couldn't wait to tickle our baby boy's tiny toes and kiss his chubby cheeks, to read and sing to him, to be a family. Most of all, we couldn't wait to cook for him.

So naturally, we were ecstatic when Levi's first teeth popped through. He became astonishingly ravenous and ate whatever we ate: pasta tossed in a fermented bean curd butter, fatty pieces of cha siu, big slices of watermelon and orange. And his appetite only grew. When he turned one, he fell in love with a steamed silken tofu coated in a beefy black bean garlic sauce—one of the many dishes Calvin developed for our Cantonese American cookbook, *Salt Sugar MSG*. We never had to make a different meal just for our toddler. It was easy. Too easy.

Then, at the 15-month mark, Levi's preferences shifted. He refused to eat anything other than chicken nuggets, ditalini pasta (only ditalini—no other shapes allowed), fresh strawberries, and his ultimate security blanket, steamed jasmine rice. Calvin and I went down Reddit holes and scoured mommy blogs, eager to find any trick to restore our son's adventurous palate. Eventually we gave in. While he ate his nuggets and rice, we served ourselves steamed fish or chicken parm family-style, hopeful something might pique Levi's interest.

A few months into this new routine, Calvin made that tofu with black bean garlic sauce again—the homey dish Levi once adored. As he watched us serve ourselves, he asked for a piece of tofu. We gave it to him sans sauce, atop his favorite food: a massive pile of rice. The next time we ate that dinner, we added a drop of the beefy sauce onto his plate. We worked our way up, spoonful by spoonful over the next several weeks, until Levi's dinner looked like ours.

At two years old, he still consumes an alarming number of chicken nuggets, and some days he's more daring than others. But creating an environment where our son can feel safe to experiment has made a huge difference. He can lean on what's familiar to become a little braver each day. We are so proud whenever he ventures beyond his comfort zone—even if he spits out the new food and tells us it's very yucky.

SILKEN TOFU WITH BLACK BEAN GARLIC SAUCE

4 SERVINGS

This is an adapted version of the recipe in Melnick and Eng's cookbook *Salt Sugar MSG*, using Lee Kum Kee brand black bean garlic sauce as a shortcut to making the savory meat sauce. Use silken tofu in plastic containers rather than the Tetra Pak blocks for the easiest removal.

1	16-oz. package silken tofu
2	Tbsp. vegetable oil
4	oz. ground beef
1	tsp. finely chopped garlic
1	tsp. finely chopped peeled ginger
¼	cup black bean garlic sauce
1	Tbsp. hoisin sauce
2	tsp. sugar
	Thinly sliced scallions, cilantro leaves with tender stems, and steamed white rice (for serving)

Pour water into a large saucepan to come 1" up sides; bring to a boil. Turn out tofu into a shallow heatproof bowl small enough to fit inside a bamboo steamer and slice ½" thick. Set bowl inside steamer. Cover; set over pan. Steam tofu until warmed through, 6–8 minutes. (Alternatively, invert into a microwave-safe bowl and microwave on high about 3 minutes.)

Meanwhile, heat oil in a medium skillet over medium. Cook beef, stirring often, until browned and cooked through, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and ginger; cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add black bean garlic sauce, hoisin sauce, sugar, and 3 Tbsp. water. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly; remove from heat.

Scoop out excess liquid from bowl with tofu. Spoon sauce over tofu and top with scallions and cilantro. Serve with rice.

Calvin, Levi, and Phoebe

COURTESY OF ALEX LAU (FAMILY PHOTOGRAPH)

FOOD STYLING BY TANEKA MORRIS. PROP STYLING BY GERRI WILLIAMS.

A Global Feast in Six Ports

Stretch your sea legs at these iconic cruise destinations

BY AMANDA EYRE WARD ■ ILLUSTRATIONS BY YASUO-RANGE

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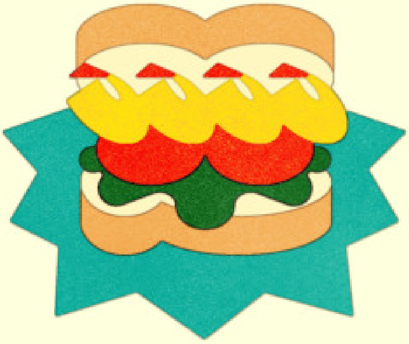
One of the joys of cruising is eating your way through the best of a new port city every day, a global smorgasbord just off deck. In each destination, distinctive flavors await: a bite of tart lilikoi (passion fruit) cheesecake, a glass of artisanal rum, a plate piled high with Manchego cheese and jamón Ibérico. Fellow cruisers may flock to grand museums and historic sites, but surprises await those who ditch the pack. From exploring local spice markets to securing a coveted reservation at a must-visit restaurant, seeking culinary adventures offshore can break up the sameness of mealtime at sea.

As soon as the captain gives the all clear, set down that mimosa and leave the buffet behind. Many cruise lines offer offshore excursions, some better than others, but mapping your own route is part of the fun. Consider these itineraries for six popular cruise ports of call a jumping off point to maximizing your time in a new locale.

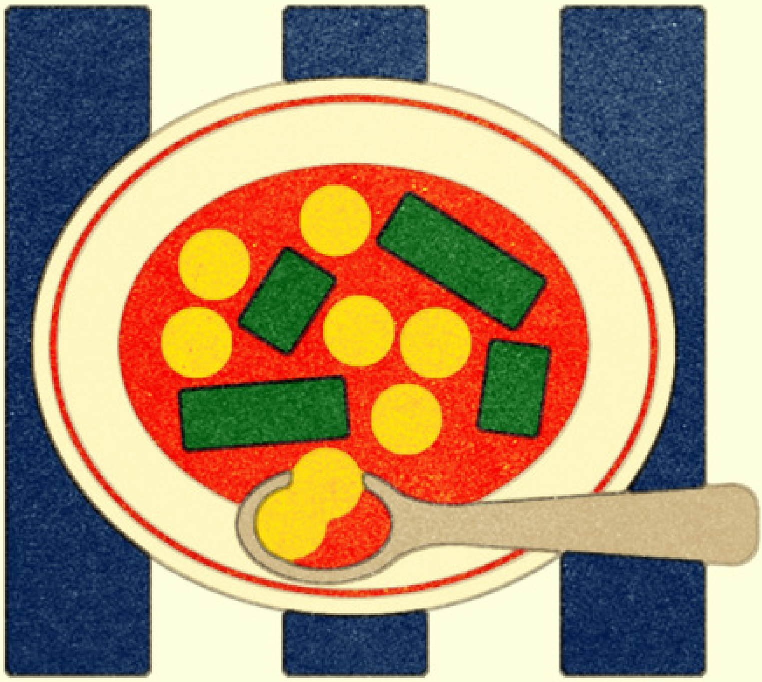


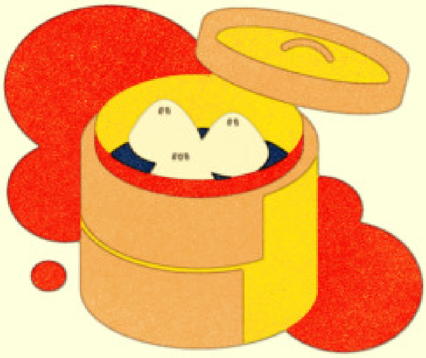
GALVESTON, TEXAS

The historic island city of Galveston feels like New Orleans and Key West rolled into one: sun-drenched beachside bars, high-end seafood restaurants, and the world's best saltwater taffy. Take in the buttery morning light at cheery Sunflower Bakery and Cafe. Here you'll find crispy soft-shell blue crab over poached eggs, topped with velvety hollandaise. Walk down the Strand, known for its opulent Victorian architecture, to reach La King's Confectionery, a charming old-timey ice cream shop, for dessert. Or head to the rooftop bar of Hotel Lucine, a retro-glam newcomer serving coastal fare in chic digs. Take in dazzling views of the Gulf of Mexico while sipping an ice-cold Tiki Wheat beer from Galveston Island Brewing Company.

BARCELONA, SPAIN

Before 9 a.m., locals still outnumber tourists in the labyrinthine paths of Barcelona's famed central market, La Boqueria. Bypass the touristy front stalls to sidle up at 14-seat Pinotxo Bar's counter. Although the dapper former proprietor Joan Bayen has passed on, it remains raucous with the chatter of festive locals and langoustines sizzling in garlic. Enjoy a Catalan breakfast of garbanzo con butifarra negra and blanco, a stew with two types of sausage, plump raisins, and crunchy toasted pine nuts. A hunk of crusty bread helps you sop up every drop. Locals buy up all the deep-fried, sugar-coated, cream-filled Xuxo pastries by 11 a.m., so grab one (or four) to go. Bar Pinotxo also serves coffee drinks, but a vermouth on ice is always a good idea.



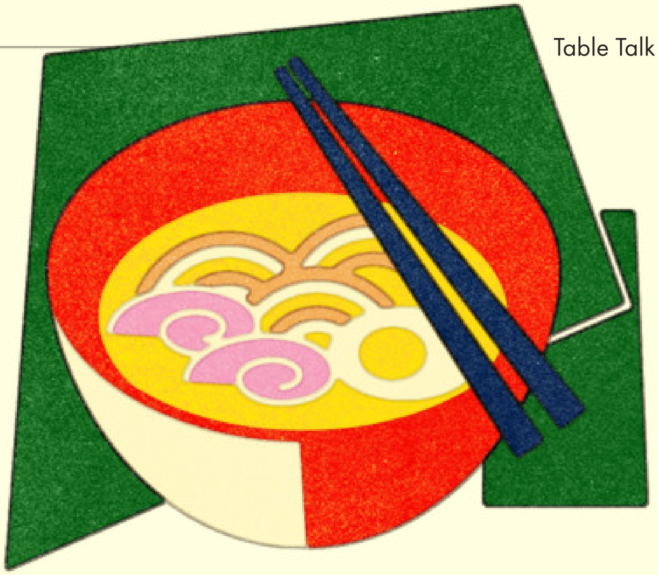


HONG KONG, CHINA

Navigating the Fragrant Harbor may not be for the faint of heart, but giving in to your sense of adventure is well worth the effort. If you're not the group-tour type, start with taking the Star Ferry across Victoria Harbor (a bargain at one dollar) to the historic Lin Heung Tea House for dim sum. Dine as locals do: Share a table, drink the potent tea, and be bold, nabbing small plates right off the clattering trolleys. When the vanilla-scented egg tarts arrive, it's time to settle up. If you remain in port for the evening, check out the Temple Street Night Market, where plastic stools and folding tables transform it into Hong Kong's liveliest dining room after dark, the scents of smoky wok hei and clay pot rice filling the air.

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

With its blue cobblestoned streets and homes splashed with cheery pastel colors, Old San Juan is a flaneur's paradise. Lunch at El Convento, a 350-year-old former Carmelite convent turned luxury hotel. Patio Del Níspero, the hotel's outdoor restaurant, offers contemporary takes on dishes like mini alcapurria fritters stuffed with ground beef and mamposteao rice-and-bean croquettes. Snag a sweet after at Limbers Del Viejo San Juan, located a block west of Catedral Basílica de San Juan Bautista. A limber is an ice pop made of tropical fruit purées or sweetened condensed milk named after Charles Lindbergh, who allegedly adored the Puerto Rican dessert (though some say it's more an homage to the famed aviator's chilly personality).

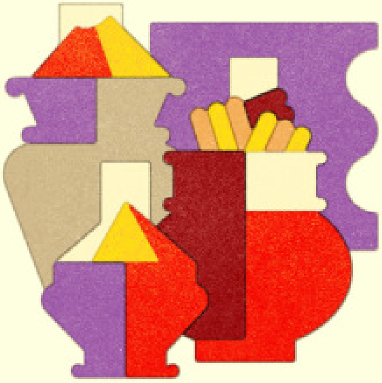


LIHUE, KAUA'I

Kaua'i is known for its glimmering rainforests and turquoise waves, so plan ahead to hike a section of the NaPali Coast, a tough trail with views of emerald peaks plummeting into the ocean. Fuel your trek at Konohiki Seafoods and order pork lau lau or an ahi poke bowl topped with crushed inamona (a relative of macadamia nuts). Japanese immigrants brought shave ice—fluffier than your average snow cone—to Hawaii in the early 1900s, and it's now ubiquitous. Order one drizzled with condensed milk and local flavors like guava, lilikoi, or pineapple. In the charming town of Kapa'a, located at the base of Nounou (the Sleeping Giant) Mountain, Wailua Shave Ice has earned a cult following for its huge portions and wild flavor combinations.

GUADELOUPE, FRENCH CARIBBEAN

Explore the shoreside patisseries that rival the best of Paris. Order a fresh-baked coconut pain au chocolat en route to Marché-Aux-Épices, the open-air spice market in Pointe-à-Pitre, where madras-clad vendors arrange pyramids of christophine squash and fresh-picked breadfruit beside mounds of colombo, a Caribbean curry spice that blends aromatic flavors like fenugreek, turmeric, and brown mustard. Venture to the beachside town of Sainte-Anne for lunch at a lolo, or open-air food stall. Try local specialties like Creole chatrou (octopus) stewed in white wine; spice-rubbed fish and Caribbean lobster; and accras, cloud-light crispy cod fritters served alongside a classic red pepper sauce often sourced from local gardens.



A SAVVY SAILOR'S GUIDE TO OFF-SHIP DINING

To make the most of your day onshore, here are some expert-tested tips:

●

Watch the clock

Ships are very clear about what time you need to be back on board. Don't be that guest whose name is called over the loudspeaker at the end of the day. When you research a restaurant's distance from port, factor in return transit time with a 45-minute buffer (better to be on board early than sprinting down the pier at last call).

●

Cash is king

While credit cards are widely accepted, it's wise to carry local currency for street food vendors and small cafés. For popular spots, especially in Mediterranean ports, make reservations, specifying you're from a cruise ship, as many places will offer priority seating for time-constrained travelers.

●

Plan your day

Download offline maps and save restaurant locations before leaving ship Wi-Fi. In many countries lunch is the main meal, and restaurants may close in the late afternoon. Embrace local dining customs but, when in doubt, ask a local. Keep an eye out for a venue with a long line of residents outside—a surefire indicator of the delicious food that awaits, worthy of your precious port time.

PROTEIN MACHINE

Chicharron-crusted chicken—you read it right

BY SHILPA USKOKOVIC • PHOTOGRAPH BY TRAVIS RAINEY

Here at the Bon Appétit test kitchen, birthdays are serious business. On a shared drive is a spreadsheet where each colleague lists their preferred treats the rest of us try to recreate. We've made gochujang and corn pizza, shrimp cocktail, three kinds of lasagna, and of course, lots of cake, including one shaped like a malfunctioning car clutch (don't ask). For my colleague Jesse Szewczyk's big day, he wrote, "no baked goods…anything super savory." And we knew just the thing. A few weeks earlier, in one of our brainstorm meetings, Jesse had raised the idea of chicken breasts breaded with crushed pork rinds, inspired by his perpetual quest for high-protein foods. So on his birthday I made him the chicharron-crusted chicken tenders of his dreams, piling them on a cake stand with a candle stuck in the center, because everyone needs cake on their birthday, even if it's one made from chicken. He loved them, and so did everyone else.

If replacing breadcrumbs with crushed chicharrones sounds outrageous, well, sure. But it's one of those things you have to try to believe. The pork rinds are fiercely savory, underpinning the tenders with deep flavor, unlike neutral breadcrumbs. Surprisingly, they're not overly greasy, and even when crushed, they retain their airy crunch. While I favor chicken tenders for their uniform size and ease of handling, you can easily swap in thinly sliced skinless, boneless chicken breasts. Eaten with a squeeze of lemon juice and a green salad, or sliced into strips, placed over rice, and served with a tonkatsu sauce, chicharron chicken tenders are the protein-packed gift that keeps on giving.

HERE'S HOW TO MAKE IT

Place **1 lb. chicken tenders** in a single layer between 2 sheets of plastic wrap. Using a meat mallet or rolling pin, pound to ¼" thick. Sprinkle all over with **1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt** and a **large pinch of garlic powder**.

Pulse **5–6 oz. salted chicharrones**, **2 tsp. Italian seasoning**, **2 tsp. paprika**, **1 tsp. garlic powder**, and **½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt** in a food processor until chicharrones are about the size of sesame seeds; transfer to a shallow bowl. Place **½ cup all-purpose flour or gluten-free flour blend** in a second shallow bowl; mix in a **large pinch of kosher salt** and a **large pinch of garlic powder**. Lightly beat **2 large eggs** and a **pinch of kosher salt** in a third shallow bowl. Working one at a time, dredge chicken in flour mixture, shaking off excess, then dip in eggs, letting excess drip back into bowl. Dredge in chicharrones mixture, pressing lightly to adhere. Place on a rimmed baking sheet.

Pour **vegetable oil** into a large skillet to come ⅓" up sides (about 2 cups) and heat over medium-high. Working in 2 batches, cook chicken, turning halfway through, until golden brown and crisp, 7–9 minutes; transfer to a wire rack. Finely grate zest from **1 lemon** over chicken. Cut lemon into wedges and serve with chicken. *4 servings*

FOOD STYLING BY MICAH MORTON. PROP STYLING BY GERRI WILLIAMS.

Land and Sea

This rustic Spanish dish marries beefy meatballs and tender seafood in a thick, savory stew

BY KENDRA VACULIN ♦ PHOTOGRAPH BY TRAVIS RAINEY

MAR I MUNTANYA

6–8 SERVINGS

The original surf and turf, this dish gets its name ("sea and mountain") from Catalonia's location between the Balearic Sea and the Pyrenees. Many homestyle versions feature shrimp and bone-in chicken, but ours is inspired by the dish at Ca L'Estevet, a 130-year-old family-run restaurant in Barcelona, where beef meatballs are showcased alongside shellfish in a tomato-based sauce with a bit of dark chocolate adding a rich, bittersweet note.

½	cup raw almonds
5	garlic cloves, 4 coarsely chopped, 1 finely grated
1¼	cups panko, divided
5	Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
1	large egg
1	lb. ground beef
2	tsp. dried oregano
3	tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, divided, plus more
	Freshly ground pepper
1	medium onion, finely chopped
1	bay leaf
1	Tbsp. thyme leaves
1	28-oz. can crushed tomatoes
3	cups low-sodium chicken broth
1½	lb. shrimp, peeled and deveined, tails left on if desired, patted dry
2	oz. dark chocolate, coarsely chopped
	Chopped parsley (for serving)

Heat almonds, chopped garlic, ½ cup panko, and 2 Tbsp. oil in a medium heavy pot over medium-high, stirring often, until almonds and panko are toasted and garlic is fragrant, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a food processor and process to a fine meal, about 1 minute; set almond mixture aside. Wipe out pot and reserve.

Whisk egg, grated garlic, 1 Tbsp. oil, and 2 Tbsp. water in a medium bowl. Mix in remaining ¾ cup panko. Let sit 5 minutes. Add beef, oregano, and 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt; season with pepper. Using your hands, gently but thoroughly incorporate. Working one at a time, scoop out golf-ball-size pieces of mixture and roll into 1½"-diameter balls (you should have about 16 total).

Heat remaining 2 Tbsp. oil in reserved pot over medium-high. Cook meatballs in a single layer, turning halfway through with tongs, until well browned on two sides, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a plate.

Add onion and 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt to fat in pot. Cook, stirring often and reducing heat if needed, until softened slightly, about 3 minutes. Add bay leaf and thyme; season with pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, 1 minute. Add tomatoes, broth, and 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt. Increase heat to high; bring to a simmer. Cover pot, reduce heat to medium-low, and cook until sauce is slightly reduced, 8–12 minutes.

Season shrimp with salt. Stir reserved almond mixture into sauce; add meatballs. Cover and cook 5 minutes. Stir in shrimp; re-cover pot and remove from heat. Let sit until shrimp are cooked through, about 3 minutes. Add chocolate and stir until melted. Divide among bowls; top with parsley.

PARTY PLANNER

Invite some friends over for a Catalonian-inspired feast.

DRINKS

Full-bodied Spanish wines like Tempranillo or Garnacha

SIDES

Boiled potatoes or crusty bread are crucial for sopping up the sauce. Plus a vinegary salad for some brightness

DESSERT

Crema catalana, a cinnamon-scented take on crème brûlée

FOOD STYLING BY MICAH MORTON. PROP STYLING BY GERRI WILLIAMS.

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A DAY-TO-NIGHT BEACH DESTINATION

The perfect recipe for a sensory escape is a getaway that provides breezy beach days and swanky nights.

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Juno + The Peacock
Juno & the Peacock

Pluma Lounge

Elliott Aster (Photographer: Nick Podraza)

BY DAY, ST. PETE-CLEARWATER, FLORIDA is widely known for its eternal sunshine, 35 miles of sugary white sandy stretches, and warm emerald Gulf waters. Laidback vibes and ideal temps make it easy to relax into seaside living—after all, the area is home to America's favorite beaches. By night, however, the region rouses with inspired dining and a stylish after-dark scene replete with Gulf-to-grill bites, sophisticated lounges, and rooftop bars.

From Palm Harbor in the north to Tierra Verde in the south, each of St. Pete-Clearwater's diverse communities has its fair share of nocturnal hot spots. The latest of which are must-hits.

Juno & The Peacock, located on Beach Drive in St. Pete, pleases every palate with new American coastal classics like crab-crusted grouper and dry-aged steaks—as well as 1,400 wine bottles and modern takes on classic libations to easily wash it all down. Once dinner is done, **Pluma Lounge**, right next door, provides the perfect multicultural nightcap. Here, South and Central American flavors are mixed and stirred into creative cocktails like the Green Ember, a combo of bourbon, lemon, mole verde, pepitas, and cilantro, as well as Kuzco's Poison, which blends pisco, passion fruit, coffee, lemon, and egg whites.

Also in Downtown St. Pete, **Elliott Aster**, the latest debut restaurant from Michelin-starred chef Lee Wolen, opens in 2025 and is destined to dish up Italian fare along with the distinctive vibes of The Vinoy Resort and Golf Club where it's located. Menu highlights include handcrafted pasta dishes like king crab tagliatelle, squid ink chitarra with Florida pink shrimp, rigatoni alla vodka, and 45-day dry-aged prime bone-in ribeye—all in Wolen's signature style of innovative, seasonal cuisine. Purists will appreciate the antipasti bar showcased in the center of the dining room, where Italian meats are sliced to order alongside whipped ricotta, and marinated vegetables serve up a slice of traditional life.

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ITALIAN TABLE

THIS MIGHT JUST BE FLORIDA'S BEST-kept secret. At this sprawling, immaculate resort, the ripples of the rooftop pool blend into the glittering waterfront behind it. Welcome to Sunseeker Resort Charlotte Harbor, a gem in Southwest Florida designed to be the ultimate escape for those who seek it—especially food lovers. Sunseeker, which opened in 2023 and spans 22 acres along the coast, is the largest and grandest new resort in the state.

It all started with an idea. What if one resort could do it all? Sunseeker is a world unto itself. A hotel with multiple pools, a guest-exclusive golf course, an expansive food hall, luxurious fine dining restaurants, a gym, salon and spa, with boat outings and local excursions. There's so much to do, guests can book long-term stays and settle into suites with stocked kitchens and laundry rooms. Stay awhile—or even longer.

Come for the waterfront, stay for the food. Sunseeker's incredible dining array leaves no craving unsatisfied. A guest can visit for a week and only indulge in a fraction of the 18 dining options, from oysters on the half shell at Kinderhook to a stunning Wagyu strip steak at Maury's, a classic steakhouse. In the Harbor Yards Food Hall, fresh pastries line the case of an open-kitchen patisserie, one of 10 delicious concepts in that 25,000-square-foot space.

Then there are five full-service restaurants for memorable meals both casual and refined. Some nights you might want pizza. Others, steamed lobster and a tiki cocktail. However, not all of Sunseeker's dining experiences require wearing shoes. Those would be at the resort's two pools where a bubbly drink on your side table is as essential as sunscreen. Refreshments and small bites are available at both pools, one of which is the largest rooftop pool in Florida. Dive in, dig in, and doze in the shade.

Wake up with the waterfront out your window and a cabana on reserve. While it's one thing to build a beautiful hotel, it's another to provide a level of hospitality and service that rises above, and above. Sunseeker's warm and experienced staff enhances its welcoming, relaxing atmosphere where everything you could want or need is within reach. They're here to make your stay as unforgettable as the sunset, and that never gets old.

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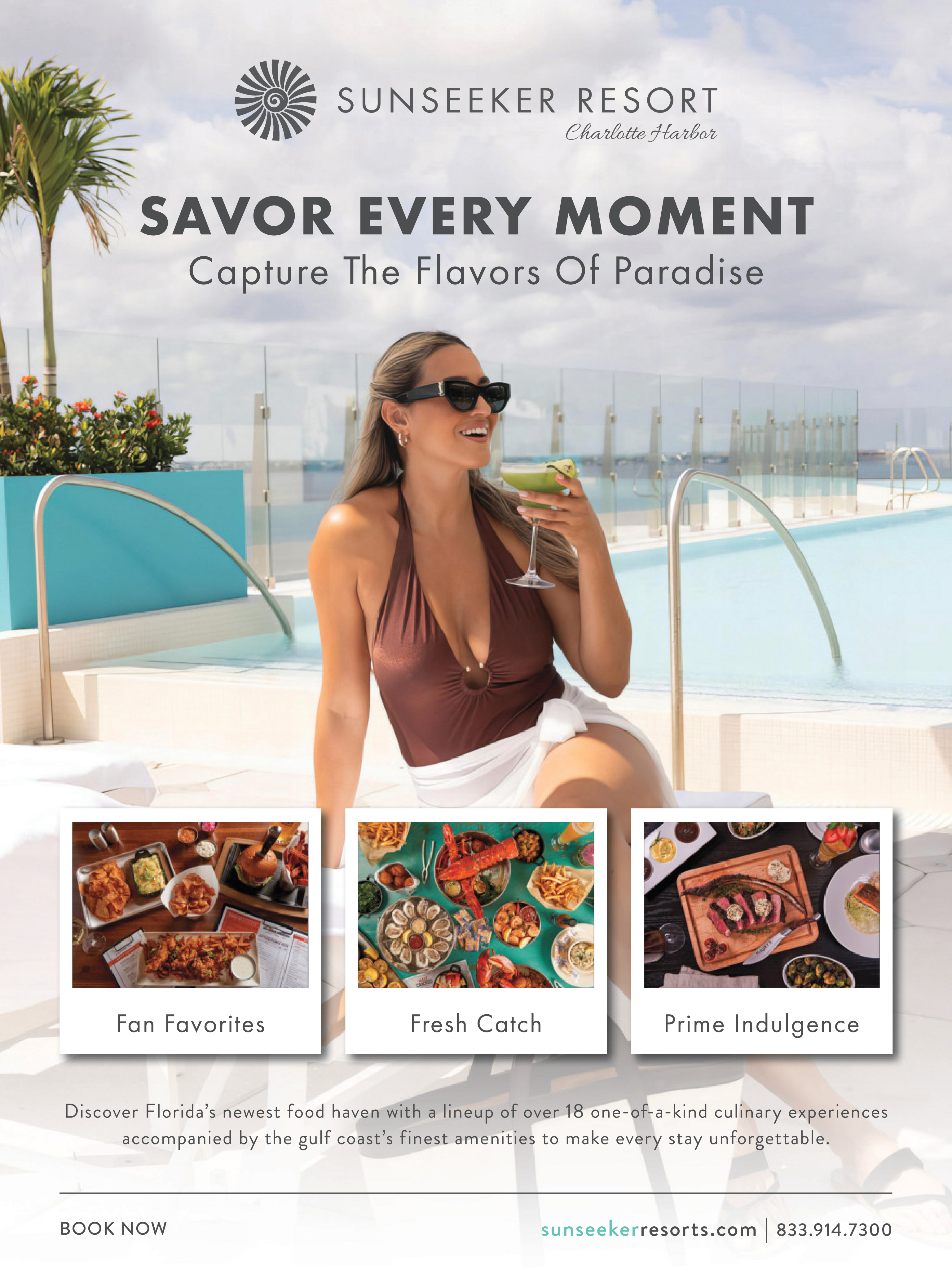

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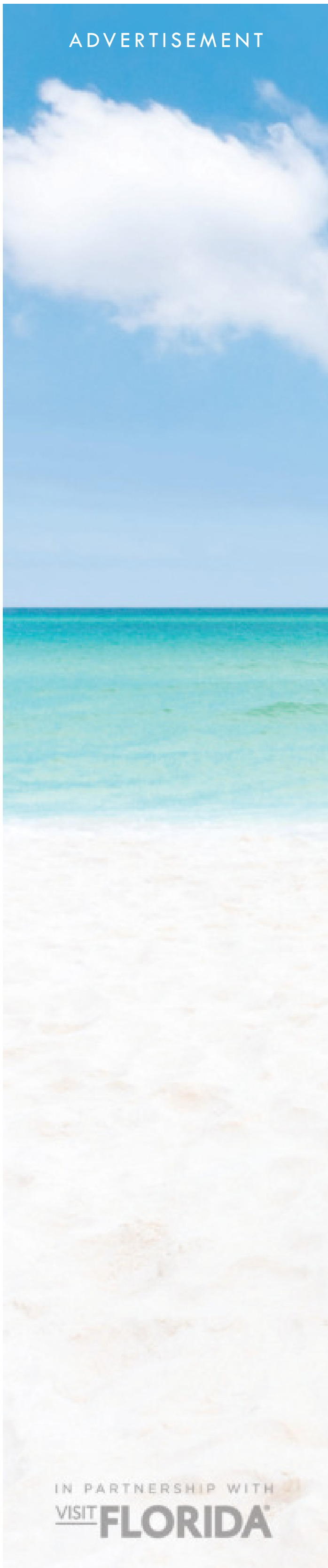

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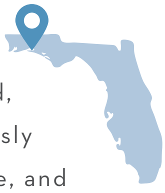

South Walton's turquoise water, 26 miles of sugar-white sand, and 16 beach neighborhoods in Northwest Florida effortlessly blend natural beauty, modern amenities, world class cuisine, and small town charm that draw generations together year after year.

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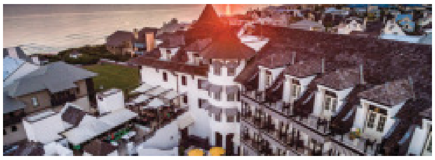

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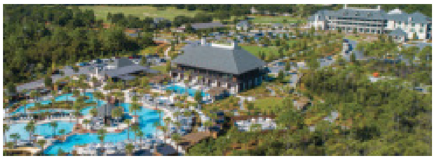

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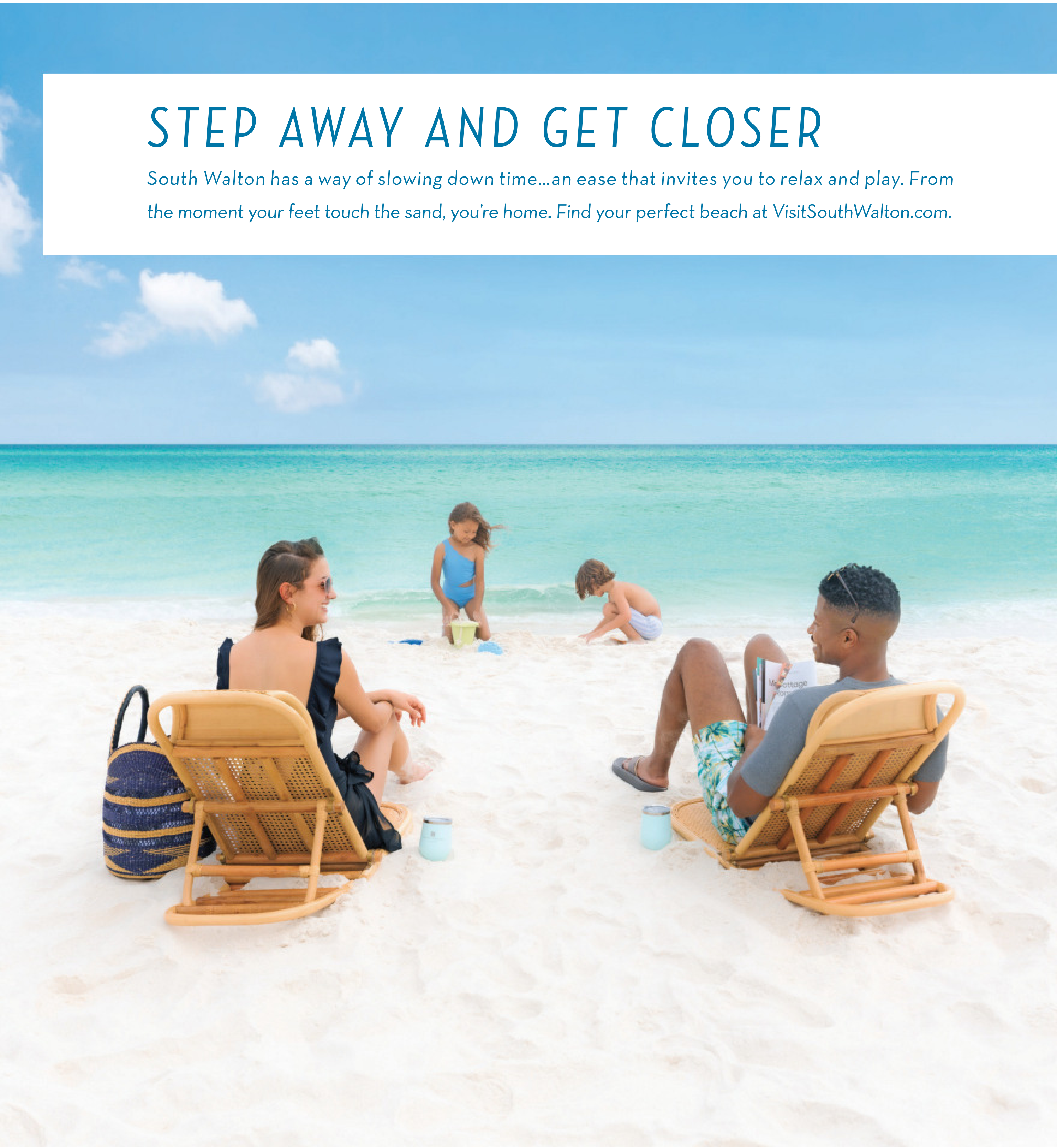

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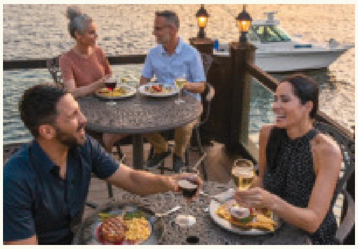

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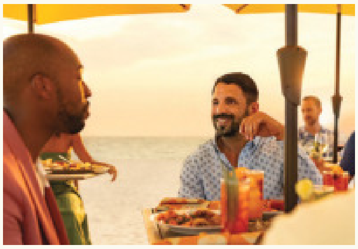

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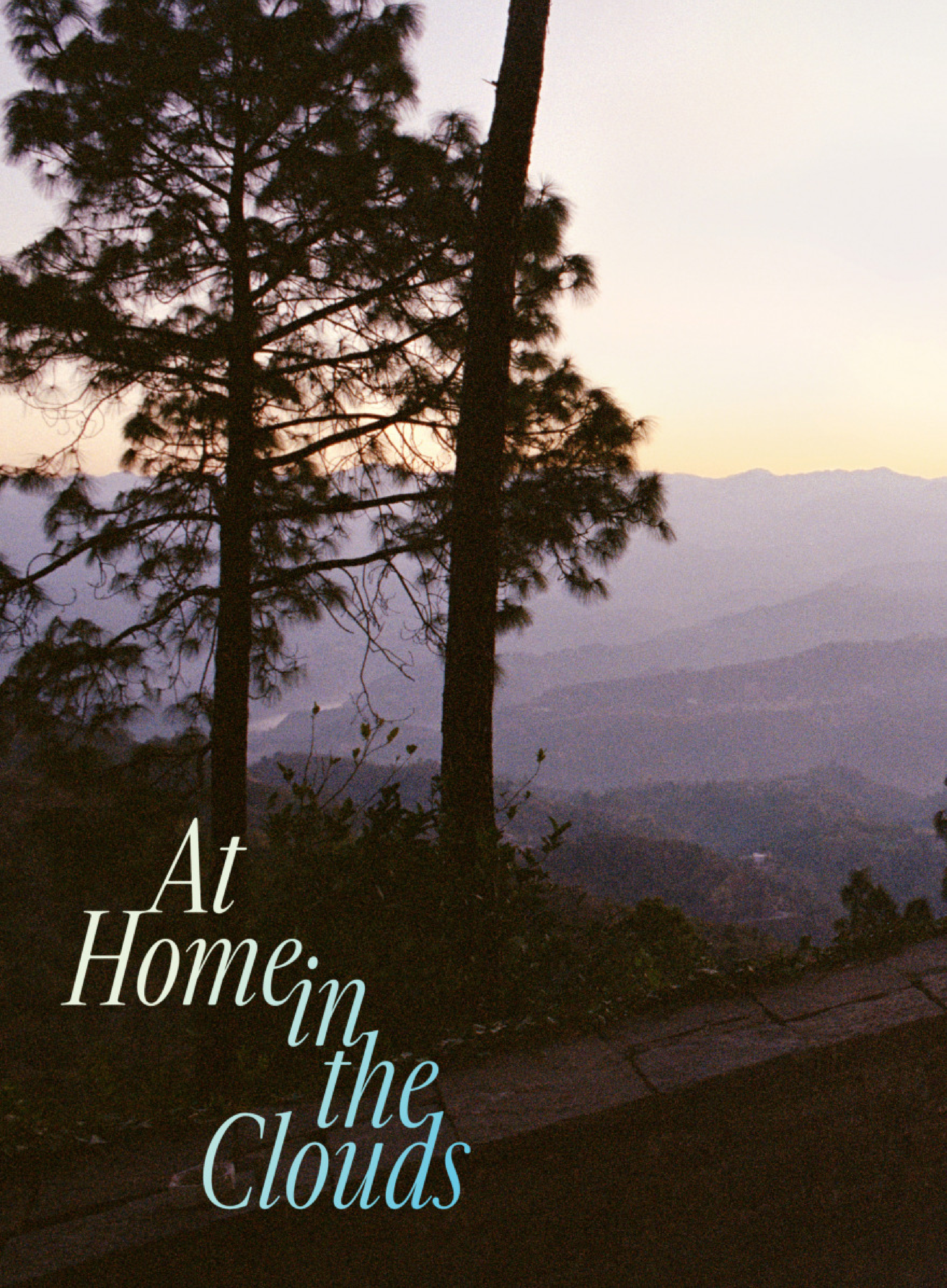
At Home in the Clouds



At the height of his career, chef **Prateek Sadhu** left Mumbai for his Himalayan roots, creating a restaurant that is reimagining dining in India

By Sarah Khan
Photographs by Ashish Shah

Prateek Sadhu is hunched over an arbi stem freshly ripped from the earth, shaking off a thick garland of dirt that clings to the root. I'm joining him for his morning commute through a five-acre farm to his restaurant, Naar. "The creative juices start flowing when you see an ingredient," he says as he inspects the broad leaf. "With nature, you just have to be present. You can do so much."

As a silvery mist slinks through the pine-clad peaks, and clouds of butterflies flit around us, he continues to stroll through farm terraces, pointing out nasturtium, cauliflower, radish ("We ferment the leaves and make a kind of kimchi"), garlic, chiles ("These are good for stuffing"), pumpkin, turmeric ("You can use the leaves to wrap fish"), and hemp sloping along the hillside. Sadhu hands me a fistful of tangy sorrel leaves to taste. "Sour, no?" he asks.

A few steps down I inhale the scent of wild curry leaves. Their musk lingers on my fingers for hours. "Here the forest is a part of you," Sadhu says, surveying his haul. "Foraging was always a part of your life if you lived in the mountains."

A few years earlier, when Sadhu led the charge as opening chef and co-owner at the zeitgeist-defining Masque in Mumbai, his days were mired in traffic and meetings.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: A rich vegetable stock serves as a base for several sauces that are on the menu at Naar. Chef Prateek Sadhu foraging in the nearby Gamberpul River.

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He embraced every opportunity to escape the city on foraging campaigns from Kashmir to Kerala, toting back bundles of sea buckthorn from Ladakh, hadga flowers from Maharashtra, and hisalu berries from Uttarakhand for his menus. But ever since he swapped beeping horns for birdsong to open Naar at the Amaya resort in the Himalayas last fall, the ingredients come to him, harvested daily from a farm steps away from his kitchen.

"Running this restaurant is a chef's dream," he says. "You want a small, quaint restaurant and a big garden where you can pluck things and cook with it. It sounds great and lovely, but to live that life…" he pauses, still awed by his good fortune, "that's powerful."

My own commute to join him was a bit more involved. Generally, I refuse to stand in line for more than 15 minutes for a table in New York, but what I will do, apparently, is travel 8,000 miles to Mumbai, fly two hours to Chandigarh, and spend another two and a half hours in the back seat of a car for a spine-rattling drive up steep, twisty Himalayan mountain roads into a quiet hamlet in Himachal Pradesh for dinner.

Destination dining of this sort is uncommon in India, but if there's anyone who's up for the challenge of creating a culinary movement far from the lights of the country's pulsing metros and under the twinkling stars of the mile-high peaks, it would be Sadhu. He left Masque in 2022, just as it earned India's top spot in the "Asia's 50 Best Restaurants." Ever since, keen epicures had been ardently awaiting his next move. His road back to the mountains was as meandering as mine was to see him: He was born in Kashmir, lived all over India, and followed his training at the Culinary Institute of America with stints at French Laundry, Le Bernardin, and Noma. Now he's home at last. Nearly a decade after he first galvanized Mumbai diners with Masque, Sadhu is luring them in droves to the terrain he knows best.

NAAR

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:
Executive chef Kamlesh Negi preps a burnt pineapple and ragi cake. Naar's take on askalu, a Himalayan dish served here with Himachali lamb.

Elsholtzia Ciliata
Scientific Name
Vietnamese Balm
[xiang ru/kinh giới]
Native language
Crested late Summer Mint
American Name

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:
Jaya, a front-of-house employee, carries a jar of oil made from Vietnamese lemon balm foraged in Himachal Pradesh. The Naar salon at sunrise.

India's vast Himalayan belt spans 13 states, from Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir in the north to Sikkim, Assam, and Nagaland in the east. It's a fertile arc, brimming with a bounty of fresh fruits and herbs that would make any chef's heart—and menu—sing. "India is so complex and so diverse, and every region needs to tell its own stories," he says. "That is the future of Indian food."

I've traveled extensively across the country, but this is my first foray into the Indian Himalayas. Sadhu's 15 courses are the perfect introduction. My palate crisscrosses the region with every bite. The arbi I'd seen on the farm appears in a predinner nibble with corn and chile, modeled after makai mamra, a modest street snack that is basically corn and chile yogurt. Sadhu's persuasive powers are such that I try—and adore—a luscious hunk of velvety lamb brain, milk-brined for 24 hours and cooked in a brown butter and black pepper masala.

I confess I haven't thought much about trout before, but I get to ponder it deeply across three luminous courses: first on the "Dirty Toast," a slab of Ladakhi khambir sourdough crowned with a stout wedge of lightly charred trout and finished with pickled mustard and onion jus, as sloppy as the name portends; next, chilled trout ceviche drowned in sea buckthorn juice, whose flavor gradually blooms in precise waves of heat cascading over my tongue; then finally in a frothed bowl, with silken morsels of trout with green garlic chutney, obscured by a pair of khat mora leaves.

Another lamb course is sopped up with a laminated Kashmiri bread called katlam, while heaping swal, a fried lentil-stuffed Uttarakhandi flatbread, with pickled duck, bamboo shoots, and hemp-seed chutney.

I have my first brush with the foods of the northeastern state of Nagaland courtesy of a soul-warming bowl of galho rice. It comes with a smoky mound of crispy lion's mane mushrooms from nearby Solan drizzled in a nutty black sesame sauce, and is brightened with a dash of tart tomato chutney. All this, as Sadhu and his team swirl around a roaring fire in an open kitchen while "Super Freak" and "Shoop" play in the background.

This isn't my first time experiencing Sadhu's mastery with ingredients that don't often cross my palate; I'd dined at Masque under Sadhu's guise years ago, during a memorable night when he made me come to appreciate lamb brain butter and chicken hearts. So I'm not surprised to find myself suspended in a liminal haze, yearning for more of what I've just finished, but tantalized at the prospect of what's yet to come. But even so, when I first learned about Sadhu's ambitions with Naar a year ago, I wondered if people would actually be willing to make the trek to join him in this pastoral setting to immerse themselves in a lesser-known culinary milieu.

Sadhu admits he didn't know quite what to expect. When he was off foraging at Masque, he found himself coming back to Uttarakhand, the northeast, and Himachal, fixated on the idea of championing this region's food in whatever he did next. Initially, he was in talks to open a Himalayan restaurant in Delhi, but when he met Deepak Gupta, the founder of Amaya, the possibility overshadowed the logistical challenges. Sadhu admits he didn't think about it. "If I had…I would maybe have never done it. I was just following passion."

During my visit, Naar's 16 seats were full, and they have been since opening. It's a testament to Sadhu's talent and convening power, certainly, but also to something larger that is simmering across the country.

"Take the Nordics as an example—once an overlooked region, it has now become a global culinary hot spot," he says. "A similar transformation took place in Spain during the late '80s and early '90s, and we are witnessing the same exciting evolution in India today."

It's a bold statement, but with ambitious chef-driven restaurants that are pushing culinary boundaries from Delhi to Bangalore, India's gastronomic revolution is well under way, and Sadhu's gamble is paying off. "At this point in time in my life," he says, "this is exactly what I want to do."

FOOD STYLING BY MICAH MORTON

PROP STYLING BY MARINA BEVILACQUA

PRECIOUS CARGO

Returning from an adventure with something special is part of what makes traveling memorable. Logistics for hauling things back can get tricky though, so we've gathered expert advice on how to safely pack your suitcase—plus four souvenir-inspired recipes you can cook to keep the good times rolling at home.

BY
JENNIFER HOPE CHOI

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
TRAVIS RAINEY

PARMIGIANO REGGIANO
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PARMIGIANO-REGGIANO

GUTTER

ASPARAGUS AND ENDIVE SALAD WITH COMTÉ CREAM

4 SERVINGS

Comté is an unpasteurized cow's milk cheese hailing from the Franche-Comté region of France. Made in the Jura Mountains, the firm Alpine cheese is similar to nutty Swiss Gruyère but sweeter and more mellow. Incredibly balanced, its smoky-sweet and slightly fruity flavors make it worth lugging back home. In this recipe the cheese is transformed into a light and airy spread for a truly special salad.

½ cup blanched hazelnuts
Kosher salt
1 bunch white and/or green asparagus (about 1 lb.), trimmed, cut on a diagonal into 2" pieces
1 garlic clove, finely grated
4 oz. Comté cheese, coarsely grated, plus more shaved for serving
1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
¼ cup plus 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
3 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
Freshly ground pepper
3 medium endives, leaves separated
2 medium shallots, thinly sliced into rings

Place a rack in middle of oven and preheat to 350°. Toast hazelnuts in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet, tossing halfway through, until golden brown and fragrant, 17–22 minutes. Remove from oven; sprinkle with salt. Let cool, then coarsely chop. Set aside.

Meanwhile, cook asparagus in a large pot of boiling salted water until crisp-tender, about 2 minutes. Immediately transfer to a bowl of ice water and let cool 2 minutes. Drain and transfer to paper towels; pat dry. Set aside.

Blend garlic, grated cheese, lemon juice, ¼ cup oil, a pinch of salt, and 6 Tbsp. cold water in a blender on high speed until very smooth and creamy (and slightly fluffy; almost like mayonnaise), 1–2 minutes for a high-speed blender or about 3 minutes for a regular blender. Taste and season Comté cream with more salt if needed. (It will thicken as it sits.)

Place vinegar, 1 Tbsp. Comté cream, and remaining 2 Tbsp. oil in a small bowl; season with salt and pepper and whisk to combine. Toss endives, shallots, reserved asparagus, and reserved hazelnuts in a large bowl to combine. Drizzle dressing over as desired (you may not need all of it); toss to coat. Taste salad and season with more salt if needed.

Evenly spread remaining Comté cream over a platter and arrange salad on top. Scatter shaved cheese over and season with more pepper.

BEST WAY TO BRING HOME

CHEESE

Advice from Anaïs Saint-André Loughran, certified cheese professional and owner of Chantal's Cheese Shop in Pittsburgh

PRE-TRIP PREP

You can bring both soft and hard cheese back from most countries so long as it doesn't pour (like ricotta) or contain meat. However, Loughran is adamant that you should leave soft varieties behind altogether. "Cheese is alive and constantly aging and ripening," she notes. "Soft European cheeses (fresh goat cheese or anything aged under 60 days made from raw milk) will never taste the same" as when you consume it in its place of origin. "The bacteria will start digesting the cheese outside-in, from the rind to its center. After that, there's nowhere for it to go, so your cheese dies."

PACKING UP

"You can always ask the cheese shop if they vacuum-pack," as that sealing process is your best bet, Loughran says. Whether they do depends on the size of the cheese shop and what they offer, but always ask. In France, where Loughran hails from, cheese is mostly fresh-cut. Cheese paper is usually leakproof, so if your product isn't too stinky (like a **Comté**), you can rest easy with it stored in its original wrapping. US Customs & Border Protection requires you to declare all agricultural items upon arrival. You risk fines or confiscation if you don't.

CHECK IT?
UP TO YOU.
Checked luggage is kept in the coldest part of the plane, at a far more favorable temperature than if you brought your bag on board.

STICKY HONEY-SOY CHICKEN LEGS

4–6 SERVINGS

For avid cooks who travel, cutlery can make a truly practical and long-lasting souvenir. Here a Chinese cleaver, called cai dao, is used to break down chicken legs into smaller pieces before getting cloaked in a sticky, sweet sauce made with honey and Dijon mustard. While a sharp chef's knife can also do the job, the sheer size and weight of a Chinese cleaver makes it a snap.

4 chicken legs (thigh and drumstick; 2–3 lb. total), patted dry
Kosher salt, freshly ground pepper
2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling
2 garlic cloves, finely grated
⅓ cup honey
¼ cup apple cider vinegar
¼ cup (packed) light brown sugar
2 Tbsp. soy sauce
1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
Steamed white rice (for serving; optional)

Place a rack in middle of oven and preheat to 350°. Cut each chicken leg into 4 pieces by separating drumstick from thigh, then cutting through the bone in the center of each drumstick and thigh. (Score with a knife first to mark where you plan to cut, then chop through with cleaver in one swift blow.) Generously season chicken all over with salt and pepper.

Heat 2 Tbsp. oil in a large stainless-steel skillet over medium-high. Arrange half of chicken pieces, skin side down, in skillet and cook until skin is crisp and golden, about 5 minutes. (Be patient, as the skin will have a tendency to stick until the fat is properly cooked out.) Turn pieces and cook on other side until golden, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a plate or rimmed baking sheet and repeat with remaining chicken. Reserve pan; do not wipe out.

Add garlic, honey, vinegar, brown sugar, soy sauce, and Dijon mustard to fat in reserved pan and bring to a boil over medium-high, stirring constantly, then cook until thickened to the consistency of warm honey (sauce should coat spoon), about 5 minutes. Add chicken and carefully toss to coat evenly, then arrange skin side up in a single layer. Transfer pan to oven and bake chicken until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of a piece registers 165°, 30–35 minutes.

Remove from oven; transfer chicken to a large shallow bowl or a platter. Spoon sauce in pan over (you might not need all of it). Serve chicken with rice (if using) and any remaining sauce on the side.

BEST WAY TO BRING HOME AN ARTISAN KNIFE

Advice from Michael Behn, founder of Moshi Moshi Knife Sharpening in Scottdale, Georgia

PRE-TRIP PREP

None! Any specialty knife shop is going to wrap your product with care for secure travel. This is especially true for crafted items in Japan, where "customer service is paramount and the whole unwrapping at home is still part of the experience," says Behn.

If for some reason you're without proper packaging for, say, your brand new **cleaver**, "three sheets of newspaper wrapped with intention and a piece of tape" is a solid alternative—though that will be an unlikely scenario.

POST-PURCHASE GEAR

Behn suggests you nab a plastic universal knife edge guard if the shop offers them. It will be handy if you plan to travel with your specialty knife again or if you need to box up your kitchen supplies for a move.

PACKING UP

Don't bury your knife under a pile of clothes. "Having it in eyesight is best," Behn says. Place the wrapped knife on top of everything else, "so when you open your suitcase, you see it and there's no danger of reaching in and snagging a corner."

CHECK IT?
YES,
"because technically it's a weapon."

NIHARI

8 SERVINGS

Once a breakfast staple for Mughal dynasty Muslim nawabs in the 16th and 17th centuries, nihari eventually became a favorite among the working classes due to its hearty, sustaining nature. Today the stew is an all-day affair in meat-eating pockets of South Asia. It's heralded as the national dish of Pakistan, and what is the best home-cooked and restaurant versions sparks furious debate at home and abroad. You can find boxed masala blends, but passionate cooks make their own mix. It's worth noting that boxed nihari masala is often spicier, so if you stumble across a homemade blend, it's a worthwhile investment. It takes up minimal luggage space and pays off big back home.

NIHARI MASALA

10 green cardamom pods
3 black cardamom pods
3 black long pepper pods
1 3"-long cinnamon stick
1 star anise pod
10 whole cloves
⅓ cup coriander seeds
⅓ cup fennel seeds
2 Tbsp. cumin seeds
1 Tbsp. black cumin seeds
1 tsp. black peppercorns
4 Tbsp. ground Kashmiri chile
2 Tbsp. cayenne pepper
1 Tbsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¾ tsp. Morton kosher salt
1 tsp. ground turmeric

NIHARI AND ASSEMBLY

2 heads of garlic, cloves separated, peeled
1 2" piece ginger, peeled
3 Tbsp. vegetable oil
5 lb. English-style bone-in beef short ribs
2 Tbsp. Diamond Crystal or 1 Tbsp. plus ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt
3 Tbsp. ghee or vegetable oil
2 medium onions, thinly sliced
2 bay leaves
Cilantro leaves with tender stems, thinly sliced serrano chile, thinly sliced peeled ginger, store-bought fried onions, toasted naan or country-style bread, and lime wedges (for serving)

NIHARI MASALA Toss green cardamom pods, black cardamom pods, long pepper pods, cinnamon stick, star anise pod, cloves, coriander seeds, fennel seeds, cumin seeds, black cumin seeds, and peppercorns in a small bowl just to combine.

Heat a dry medium skillet over medium. Toast spice mixture, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add Kashmiri chile, cayenne, salt, and turmeric and toast, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 10 seconds. Transfer spice mixture back to bowl and let cool. Transfer to a spice mill or small blender and pulse to a fine powder.

DO AHEAD: Nihari masala can be made 2 months ahead. Store airtight at room temperature.

NIHARI AND ASSEMBLY Place a rack in middle of oven and preheat to 350°. Process garlic, ginger, and oil in small blender until smooth. Set paste aside. (Alternatively, blend in a measuring glass with an immersion blender.)

Sprinkle short ribs all over with salt. Heat ghee in a large ovenproof heavy pot over medium-high. Working in batches if needed, cook short ribs, meaty side down, until a deeply browned crust forms, about 6 minutes per batch. Transfer to a plate with tongs, leaving fat behind.

Cook onions in same pot, stirring occasionally, until softened and golden, 10–12 minutes. Reduce heat to medium, add reserved paste; cook, stirring often, until beginning to stick to bottom of pot but not burning, about 4 minutes. Add bay leaves and 3 Tbsp. nihari masala; cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute.

Pour in 6–7 cups water (there is very little risk of the pot running dry and you can adjust the sauce's consistency at the end, so no need to be exact here); bring to a simmer, stirring and scraping up browned bits. Nestle short ribs back into pot; return liquid to a simmer. Cover pot, transfer to oven, and braise until meat is tender and liquid is thickened, 2½–3 hours. (If too soupy, uncover and simmer in oven until slightly thickened, 20–30 minutes. Or, add a little more water to loosen if needed.)

Skim as much fat from surface as possible; discard. Divide nihari among shallow bowls and top with cilantro, chile, ginger, and fried onions. Serve with naan and lime wedges for squeezing over.

BEST WAY TO BRING HOME

DELICATE SPICES

Advice from Mohammad Salehi, founder of fair trade Heray Spice in Chicago

PRE-TRIP PREP

Spices, like nihari, lose their aroma and flavor pungency over time, so Salehi recommends choosing ingredients you know you'll use within 12 to 24 months upon return.

Also consider shopping for what the region is renowned for, such as Sri Lankan green cardamom, Afghan wild mountain cumin, or Madagascan vanilla. Buying directly from the source guarantees you are supporting local economies while also purchasing the freshest product possible. Be sure to stash resealable plastic or silicone baggies in your suitcase before you hit the road.

PACKING UP

For spices with potent scent or staining power (think saffron or turmeric), double up on the baggies. Salehi suggests bringing a flattened 6x4x4" cardboard box with you for anything you intend to purchase in glass. They cost around 60 cents each online and when assembled can withstand up to 200 lb., so you'll know your stuff is safe.

CHECK IT?
UP TO YOU!
Anything double-bagged is fine in your carry-on.

BALSAMIC BUTTERSCOTCH SAUCE

MAKES ABOUT ¾ CUP

Butterscotch sauce is better with balsamic. Yes, the very same vinegar that's drizzled over tomatoes and mozzarella is the secret to a perfectly punchy ice cream topper. The prized vinegar is reduced to a thick syrup that gets bolstered with cream, butter, and sugar to create a delightfully bright sauce. Also try it over almost any grilled or roasted fruit or your favorite cake.

- **½ cup balsamic vinegar**
- **⅓ cup (67 g) light brown sugar**
- **3 Tbsp. unsalted butter, cut into small pieces**
- **⅓ cup heavy cream**
- **1 tsp. vanilla extract**
- **¾ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt**

Bring vinegar to a simmer over medium-high heat in a small saucepan. Cook, stirring occasionally, until reduced to a thick syrup (similar in consistency to hot honey), about 5 minutes.

Add brown sugar and butter to vinegar syrup and cook, stirring constantly, until butter is melted and sugar is dissolved, about 2 minutes. Remove pan from heat and stir in cream, vanilla extract, and salt. Let butterscotch sauce cool slightly before serving (it will thicken as it cools).

DO AHEAD: Butterscotch sauce can be made 5 days ahead. Transfer to an airtight container; cover and chill.

BEST WAY TO BRING HOME

GLASS BOTTLES

Advice from James Beard Award–winning sommelier Belinda Chang

PRE-TRIP PREP

"Food, drink, flavors, and aromas are really some of the most powerful ways to spark memories," says Chang. But if you're flying with liquids over 3 oz., like a rare **balsamic vinegar**, "you have to get clever." Chang travels with poly mailer bags so she can send her dirty laundry home and stow fragile liquids in her luggage. Shipping your clothes is far less expensive than a heavy case of wine.

PACKING UP

If you're not up for a post office run, Chang recommends wrapping bottles in worn athleisure, which is made of moisture-wicking material and somewhat waterproof. Stow those bundles in packing cubes for extra protection.

THE UPGRADE

Chang, along with *Bon Appétit's* resident sommelier André Mack, are on the founding board for Panier. The wine bag company's two-bottle Pico is chic enough to use as a tote and made of durable ballistic nylon—similar to the luxury material used in Formula 1 race cars. To keep your goods extra chill, pop in an ice pack; the Pico stays at a cool 50° for 20 hours.

CHECK IT?
YES.
If your liquids are over 100 ml, you know the drill.

Hugh Corcoran in the kitchen of the Yellow Bittern, the city's most talked-about restaurant. P. 76

By Amiel Stanek
Photographs by Bobby Beasley

HOW TO EAT London

England's capital city is a dining destination like no other

Twenty years ago this month, *Gourmet* magazine devoted an entire issue to what was then a rather audacious claim: that London was, as the all-caps cover line declared, "The Best Place to Eat in the World Right Now." Over the 180 pages that followed, the case was vigorously made. An A-to-Z celebration of everything from the city's breakfast culture to its open-air markets. Nigel Slater's paean to the likes of St. John and the River Café, places that still hold sway today. A scene report from the red-hot East End. *This must be the place!*

But looming over all this was one word: "actually." The implied specter of real or imagined Bad Old Days. The editors were well aware that this anointment would come as a surprise, something of a zag. (Ruth Reichl's editor's letter opens with an anecdote about a Heathrow passport agent insisting that nobody comes to London to eat for pleasure.) Curiously, over the decades that followed, writers could not resist the urge to project a big fat chip (sorry) onto the shoulders of England's capital city. Even the most glowing story had the same sort of twinge, if not the same familiar setup: *You might think it's all pie and mash, but actually it's….*

Well, let us be the ones to officially call it: London's "Actually" Era is over. It is—has been, will continue to be—one of the world's greatest places to eat. Full stop. And London knows it too—the chefs, but also the diners. There is a confidence to the city's food scene that is positively electric. Modern British cooking has cemented itself as a fully legible category, with lore and canon, elder gods and young flamethrowers. Cuisines from every corner of the globe are an integral and integrated part of the culinary framework, as English as Branston pickle. Ask any friend of a friend for their list, and they're as likely to extol the virtues of a hot new Michelin contender as an Iranian stew specialist they read about in Jonathan Nunn's food culture newsletter "Vittles."

London is right now; London is forever; London is alive, and vital, and irresistibly delicious. And if you're hungry for a taste of a true culinary destination, this is the best place to start.

BOUCHON RACINE

The Eurostar can get you from London to Paris in a hair over two hours, yet the last few years have seen an explosion of elegant bistros on this side of the English Channel. Among them, chef Henry Harris's Bouchon Racine stands out from the crowd. A reopening of the much-beloved restaurant he ran from 2002–2015, Racine is a gutsy love letter to Lyonnaise cuisine on the second floor of a 300-year-old pub. Charcuterie and cheese, potatoes and onions, meat and offal: These are the ingredients that animate Harris's chalkboard menu, all old friends, treated with a grandmotherly mix of tenderness and brawn. A rosy slab of chicken liver pâté, shot through with nubbins of cured pork, coarse enough to make cornichons blush. Wobbly tête de veau, cheek by jowl by tongue, served with an equally wobbly sauce ravigote. Lamb kidneys that'll make your nostrils flare from two tables away. This is cooking that feeds the soul and lubricates the joints and makes a nice long train nap sound good indeed.

MAMBOW

On a cold, damp, blustery night, you'd be lucky to find yourself at Mambow. Ideally hunched over a steaming bowl of chef Abby Lee's Kam Heong Mussels fresh from the wok, electronic music pumping through the speakers, the scent of soy, curry leaf, and chile instantly banishing whatever chill you walked in with. The rich, shrimpy sauciness left over at the bottom of the bowl is too good to waste, and you'll find that single order of aromatic pandan rice you thought might get you through the whole meal disappearing faster than a glass of crisp, fizzy Chenin. Same story with a hot and sour short rib curry, the chunky, tamarind-tart braising medium beguiling long after the bones have been nibbled bare. The smart move is to just double that rice order right off the bat, otherwise you'll doubtless find yourself hoarding near-empty plates and bowls while awaiting a re-up, not willing to surrender a single drop of Lee's masterfully layered Malaysian flavors.

YUKI BAR

London has long been a destination for natural wine, with ready access to European producers and the kinds of coveted allocations that make US somms green with envy. And over the last year, Yuki Bar, a low-lit cubby hole built into a railway arch in London Fields, has quietly become the coolest place in town to throw back a glass of low-intervention juice. Owner and master sommelier Yukiyasu Kaneko, whose résumé includes stints at Noma and the dearly departed P Franco, presides over the room from behind a horseshoe bar, pouring tastes and offering guidance on the idiosyncratic bottle list. The chalkboard menu leans homestyle Japanese: plump mussels steamed with sake, grilled onigiri in a puddle of dashi, a warming monkfish hot pot. It is a welcome departure from the more de rigueur wine bar fare. Strikingly subtle and long on umami, it's fascinating food to pair with a second bottle of earthy Gamay from the Auvergne and plenty of Japanese disco.

A view of the bustling open kitchen at Mambow

WHERE TO STAY

If you're after a once-in-a-lifetime experience, **The Lanesborough** is where you want to be. Just off Hyde Park and a short walk from Buckingham Palace, the lavishly appointed Regency-era mansion offers the kind of next-level hospitality—as in, each room has an actual butler—that Anglophile dreams are made of. For a more boutique experience, the Art Deco–chic **Beaumont Mayfair** is the vibe; Le Magritte, their swank in-house cocktail bar replete with white-jacketed servers, is perfect for predinner martinis and all manner of nightcaps. And the stylish, tucked-away **Bloomsbury Hotel** is unmatched as far as location is concerned, just steps away from The British Museum and the beating heart of Soho while feeling like a world unto itself.

TOLLINGTON'S

Ed McIlroy has a knack for infusing old spaces with the sort of madcap energy that makes them positively magnetic—places that feel a whole personality. He did it first with The Plimsoll, a gorgeous old pub that seemingly woke up one day with an appreciation for biodynamic Burgundy and Sonic Youth and had Londoners flocking to Finsbury Park for a gloriously greasy American-style cheeseburger. And he's done it again with Tollington's: a fish and chips shop that returned from a class trip to Barcelona with a duffel full of vermut and big ideas about the unexplored synergy between the British chippy and the tapas bar. This is a place to linger over glasses of Estrella and big-gulp cava while little plates of fresh and fried seafood appear and disappear. But its the "chips bravas" that are the unifying principle: shaggy-crisp, bearing the whiff of beef tallow that sets the best English chips apart and a dollop of the kind of undauntedly garlicky aioli that tops true Spanish patatas bravas.

PLANQUE

There is a part of Planque that isn't for everybody. Literally: A members' club for the sort of urban natural wine enthusiast who finds themself in need of a place to cellar the wine they can't store at home and a modish environment in which to drink said wine. Not you? That's just as well, because the restaurant at the heart of Planque, helmed by the supremely talented Sebastian Myers, is open to all and one of the best places in the city to splash out on rare, expertly cellared wine. Myers's menu—a little British, a bit French—is perfectly met to the occasion, high-touch yet easy to love, precisely delicious. An elegantly constructed guinea foul pithivier is packed with fine-dining flair but retains all the greedy pleasure of the best sausage roll. Sheepy Wigmore ice cream under a shock of burnt meringue is every bit as clever as it is craveable, Willy Wonka stuff. Is it serious fun food? Or fun serious food? Questions to consider with a full belly and a glass of vintage Vin Jaune in hand.

MOUNTAIN

Welsh chef Tomos Parry first made waves in 2018 with Brat, a hearth-centric Basque restaurant that introduced the city's diners to the sticky-fingered pleasures of whole-grilled turbot and earned him his first Michelin star. Mountain, his latest venture, is more expansive in all respects—more seats, fancier grills, a bigger playbook of influences and techniques—while retaining the giddy obsession with sourcing that has become Parry's signature. Each line of the menu feels like an invitation to share in the discovery of some uniquely delicious ingredient. Sobrasada, a chorizo-esque sausage made exclusively for the restaurant in Mallorca. Beef from heirloom dairy breeds, aged on the hoof—wouldn't you like to taste the difference between a steak from a three-year-old Jersey and an eight-year-old Friesian? Parry does. This is the kind of serious restaurant where the chef is having *fun*, playing with house money and having a grand time doing it—which is to say, the very best kind.

CAFÉ DECO

No other restaurant embodies the evolution of modern British cuisine quite like chef Anna Tobais's Café Deco. Her résumé is strongly felt: the understated ebullience of Jeremy Lee's Quo Vadis; the ingredient worship of the River Cafe's Ruthie Rogers; a bit of the elegant straightforwardness that has made Margot Henderson's Rochelle's Canteen a cult classic. But Tobias is more than the sum of her mentors, with a style of cooking that is at once whimsical and integrated. Here, zurek, the Polish sour rye soup, can share space with a pork tonnato and a flaky-crusted beef and onion pie. Confidence is the through line. Tobias cooks with a conviction that humble ingredients treated with care will always be more arresting than an Instagram feed's worth of over-clever garnishes and gimmickry—and here, they absolutely are. Throw in a covetable natural wine list from the team at 40 Maltby Street, and you have a restaurant that reflects the best of what London dining has to offer right now.

MODERN ICONS

Save room for these London favorites

St. John

No restaurant has left a more indelible mark on the London dining scene than St. John. Simply put, chef Fergus Henderson and Trevor Gulliver made British food cool, and the legions of cooks who have passed through the kitchen here continue to spread the gospel of offal worship and good English produce far and wide.

The River Café

More than 30 years on, Ruthie Rogers's River Café still sings and can take credit for the vein of ingredient-driven, alluringly austere Italian cooking that runs through this city's restaurants. The food is pricey, polished, and the right kind of precious, and the room always makes you feel just a little bit famous.

Quo Vadis

If walls could talk! Once a brothel, the former home of Karl Marx, and for the last 99 years a restaurant and club, Quo Vadis has been helmed since 2012 by the inimitable Jeremy Lee, whose jocular brand of seasonal British cooking feels like a hearty slap on the back. Start with an eel sandwich and resist the urge to steal one of the John Broadley–illustrated menus.

Rochelle Canteen

Secreted away within the walled garden of a former school, Rochelle Canteen feels like a world unto itself, a chic-minimalist hideaway with a menu to match. Founded by Melanie Arnold and Margot Henderson, with the latter's son Hector now running the kitchen, it just might be London's most charming restaurant.

Graam Bangla

The place to be for a taste of real-deal Bengali food. Order the mixed platter of bhorta, an array of mashes that show off the range of flavors on offer, some fiery with mustard oil, others pungent with fermented fish. Then let your server guide you through an array of river fish curries and go to town.

THE DEVONSHIRE

London is full of beautiful old pubs, and lately also full of beautiful old pubs that have come under new management determined to restore them to their former glory—or, even better, some idealized version thereof. None have made a splash quite like The Devonshire, a Georgian-era Soho boozer that publican Oisín Rogers, Charlie Carroll, and chef Ashley Palmer-Watts have transformed into one of the hottest tickets in town. The ground floor pub room pours what is widely thought of as the finest pint of Guinness in a city that has gone absolutely gonzo for the stuff—something to do with dedicated tap lines, customized carbon dioxide-to-nitrogen ratios, and other sorts of dark magic—but the real fireworks can be found in the upstairs restaurant. Quite literally: A massive, heaving wood-fired grill is the focal point of the room and the guiding force behind Palmer-Watts's straightforwardly excellent pub menu of dry-aged, house-butchered chops, sparkling-fresh British seafood—creel-caught Scottish langoustines, anyone?—and simple sides like duck fat chips and creamed leeks treated with fine-dining aplomb.

WHERE TO SHOP

If you're looking for edible souvenirs to bring home, set aside a Saturday morning for a trip to Spa Terminus in Bermondsey. Here an assortment of some of the city's finest food artisans have turned old railway arches into their bases of operations, with many open to the public for a few hours each weekend. Grab an exceptional coffee from **Monmouth Coffee Company,** a pastry from **Little Bread Pedlar,** and you're all set to browse: cheese from **Neal's Yard Creamery,** marmalades from **England Preserves,** and all manner of vermouths and cordials from **Gimlet Drinks** are begging to be smuggled home in a checked bag. And be sure to swing by **Dynamic Vines,** a wine distributor that hosts (quite generous) free tastings of select bottles most Saturday mornings, Zalto glassware and all. (Hey, it's five o'clock somewhere!)

THE TAMIL PRINCE

You could build an entire London eating itinerary around South Asian food, from casual family run chaat houses to Michelin-starred tasting menu spots and all the vastness in between. But perhaps the most unique to the UK is the phenomenon of the Desi pub. What began as refuges from racial discrimination, old English boozers run by South Asian immigrants serving the food of their homelands, have become a distinct part of the city's culinary fabric, beloved institutions where British ales and Indian curries exist in beautiful synergy. Among the buzziest is the Tamil Prince, a collaboration between chef Prince Durairaj, former executive chef of the wildly popular Roti King chainlet, and JKS restaurant group alum Glen Leeson. The pair have turned an unassuming corner of Islington into a red-hot destination for plates of crackling onion bhaji, a silky paneer butter masala demanding vast quantities of flaky roti for mopping, and their signature channa bhatura: a great blimp of fried dough served with spiced chickpeas and raita.

IKOYI

Through an air lock of a door, past dry-aging chambers glowing with slabs of beef, around a corner into a hushed cloister of dusky copper and English oak: You're in Jeremy Chan's world now. This is the workshop of an intensely cerebral chef, who, along with managing director Iré Hassan-Odukale, has created a 10-course experience truly worthy of hours and hard-earned coin. Chan's food is soulful and slippery, playing fast and loose with references from the very first bite. A delicate tartlet: raw Cornish beef atop a sticky-rich carrot emulsion, mounted with a tumble of peas barely larger than the beads of caviar and Pyrenean finger lime vesicles around them. It is an outrageous thing to have in one's mouth, bursts of salty, sweet, and sour, shooting stars in a galaxy of grassy funk—an everyday dish of peas and carrots strapped to a rocket and sent into low earth orbit. It goes on like this, each course managing to surprise and delight in equal measure, the kind of singular dining experience that lingers long after the last plate is cleared.

Everybody's Talking About...

THE YELLOW BITTERN

Nearly all the (many) reviews, think pieces, and posts about the Yellow Bittern start with these facts. The restaurant has 18 seats. It is only open for lunch, seatings at noon and 2 p.m., and is closed on weekends. It has no website nor social media presence (save that of its chef, Hugh Corcoran—more on that later), and reservations can only be made by phone or, famously, postcard. There's a lefty bookstore in the basement. Cash only, please.

That this all sounds a bit out of time and space is obviously a good hook, and clearly by design. Corcoran, along with his partners Oisín Davies and Frances Armstrong-Jones, imagined the restaurant as a sort of prelapsarian oasis, a portal to a time before reservation apps and point-of-sale tablets sucked the romance out of dining, and a long, boozy midday meal was the order of the day. The menu changes daily and reflects Corcoran's proud Irish heritage, as well as time spent in France and the Basque country: potato leek soup, guinea fowl pie, Dublin coddle, rice pudding. Simple food, well-seasoned and honest, pretentious only in its aggressive unpretentiousness.

But the reason the Yellow Bittern became the talk of the town could not be more 2025: an Instagram post. Less than a month after opening, Corcoran took to his personal account (de facto the establishment's) to call out what he deemed bad behavior on the part of diners—chiefly, ordering stingily, sharing too little food and abstaining from wine, violating the unspoken agreement between patron and proprietor that allows restaurants to stay in business. "When you come to a restaurant, it is expected that you are there to eat and drink with some sort of abandon." The comments section went nuts. Endless ink was spilled. Corcoran doubled down. Responses ranged from outrage (Who can afford to have a weekday wine lunch these days?!) to approval (The customer is not always right!) and everything in between. Everyone had an opinion, whether they ate there or not. Just like that, a lunch spot around the corner from King's Cross Station became the nexus of a conversation about culture, taste, and class (did we mention Corcoran is an avowed communist?) that could not feel more of the moment.

For the full story, head to bonappetit.com/the-yellow-bittern.

Bertolt Brecht
Nigel Slater

Curries, roti, and rice on the move at the Tamil Prince. BELOW: Members of the Ikoyi team getting ready for action.

THE SIDE TRIP

Cornwall

Seafood, surf, and superlative pastries make England's southwesternmost tip a destination like no other

By Chris Morocco

My first introduction to the singular beauty of England's West Country was in Somerset 15 years ago and began with an alarmingly sharp right turn off a country highway onto a "lane"—a steep descent between fields of indifferent sheep along what most Americans might call a hiking path. Towering hedgerows of beech trees sprouting through ancient stones periodically engulfed our car, threatening the paint job and protruding elbows. So when my wife, a Somerset native, brought our family of four to Cornwall for a seaside escape last summer, I thought I knew what to expect. Turns out the rugged far-southwestern tip of England is like no place I've ever been, with a rural charm reminiscent of neighboring Somerset, Devon, and Dorset, but with a unique scenery and vibe all its own.

Wide sandy beaches ease their way into gentle surf, surrounded by world-class art, outstanding dining, and some of the best coffee I have ever had. The mood is relaxed, the reserve of rural England softening under vast stretches of sea and sky, and gardens brim with lush palm trees, ferns, and cacti thriving on jet stream warmth. The restaurants are in a class of their own, embodied by casual-fancy establishments that occupy a middle ground between pubs and fine dining, featuring brilliantly executed food absent of any pretense.

Middle Colenso Farm

We found this small collection of cottages through Sawday's, which visits all the properties they recommend, and for us has an impeccable track record for accommodations across Europe. (Many rural areas of England eschew booking platforms like Airbnb, so regional sites can dramatically expand options.) Middle Colenso Farm is a series of old stone farm buildings, updated with tasteful interiors and sculpted gravel paths through beautiful lush subtropical vegetation. Along with a fully functional and well-stocked kitchen, we were grateful to have a wood-burning fireplace as nights are cool even in summer. Yoga classes and a sauna are located on-site, and the location near Penzance and St Ives makes it a great jumping-off point for exploration.

Origin Coffee

The pleasure I take in coffee and pastries is well-documented, and a source of great amusement to my children who roll their eyes when I propose planning an entire day around it. Good thing they can't drive, because my detour to Porthleven to visit Origin was the caffeine highlight of the week. The beans are roasted in-house, the coffee drinks meticulously crafted, and the quayside location made for a uniquely pleasant experience. And the baked goods are nothing short of dreamy: My sugar-dusted laminated morning bun was unimpeachable, and the fact that they had a gluten-free pistachio tea cake for my wife just sealed the deal.

A view of the Polperro Harbor in the fishing village of Polperro

COURTESY OF GETTY IMAGES

Argoe

At the edge of a working harbor outside of Penzance, this modern restaurant's minimalist, boxy silhouette hovers above the water. The majority of the seats are outdoors on a partly covered deck, with tartan blankets at each place to dull the chill, and the cool, salty wind made the simple, refined seafood dishes all the more compelling. A section of grilled skin-on turbot rests in a pool of butter and lemon, while a deep, bisque-textured fish soup had saline richness that I had never thought possible. Squid "meatballs" were devoured by our kids along with sardines, while my wife and I reverently dismantled a delicate hispi cabbage that had been grilled and lacquered with shellfish butter. This is a restaurant that could exist nowhere else in the world, a celebration of the region's vast oceanic bounty served with honest, unfussy deliciousness.

Tremenheere Sculpture Gardens

Cornwall's temperate climate is a welcoming environment for all kinds of tropical plants, and this garden showcases outrageous examples of palm trees and other flora one might not expect in rural England, with contemporary sculptures interspersed throughout. Our favorite was the James Turrell installation set into the hillside, with an oculus that brings the sky seemingly within reach. It is a bit of a trek to get to, but well worth it—if you're lucky, you may well end up being the only visitor.

The Big Green Shed

A hole-in-the-wall kind of place, if the wall is a field of wildflowers set in one of the most picturesque countrysides on earth—the perfect intermezzo to a day spent exploring. There's indoor seating in the event of rain (a not-uncommon occurrence), but the widely spaced picnic tables in the garden are where you want to be. The vibe is super casual, with an all-day breakfast menu and rotating lunch specials. The options are an eclectic mix, featuring lightened versions of classics: think gluten-free pancakes with savory yogurt and berries, crispy eggplant bao buns, and shakshuka with Halloumi cheese.

Tate St Ives Museum

If you can brave the narrow streets of St Ives and manage to find a parking spot, this is a fantastic small museum just steps away from the beach in one of Cornwall's quaintest towns. We were entranced by Mark Rothko's Seagram murals, as well as the colorful works of Beatriz Milhazes. I highly recommend **Talay Thai Kitchen** for lunch before or after; the second-floor location makes it feel comfortably removed from the fray of tourists on the main road through town.

St Ives Bakery

Outside of major cities, high-quality bakeries can be tough to come by. St Ives Bakery is an absolute standout by any metric, a must-visit for sourdough breads, cakes, and its famous laminated buns—a.k.a. cruffins—which are well worth the shame of saying aloud to order. The savory pasties, stuffed with irresistible fillings like steak and Stilton cheese or veggies and cheddar, make for a great walking lunch. The line down the block is absolutely worth it, especially if you're stocking up on a couple days' worth of baked goods.

The Coast Path and the Beach

Wherever you find yourself in Cornwall, you must seek out one of the many access points to the footpath that runs all around the southwest coast of England. It affords some of the most spectacular hiking in the country and is available to everyone in keeping with the English tradition of maintaining rural land accessible for recreation. And the ease of stepping onto Cornwall's sandy, expansive beaches will astound you. Affordable wet suits (as little as $25!) from local shops and the gentle surf make getting into the ocean, and even paddling into a surfing or boogie-boarding lineup, very appealing.

NEXT TIME

We've already got a list going for our return trip to this magical place. A little bit further inland, chefs Tom Adams and April Bloomfield's 66-acre **Coombeshead Farm** near Launceston offers comfortable rooms and an ever-changing seasonal menu that reflects the bounty of the on-site farm, bakery, and Mangalitza ham-making operation. We also vowed to visit one of chef Simon Stallard's restaurants, like the rustic-chic **Standard Inn** in Portscatho, or his more casual beachside eatery, **The Hidden Hut** on the coast path near Truro.

THESE GLOBE-SPANNING
GINS EMBRACE BOLD
BOTANICALS THAT
INTRIGUE AND DELIGHT

THE NEW ALCHEMY

OF GIN

BY **SAM STONE**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **SUZANNE SAROFF**

FOOD STYLING BY
MAGGIE RUGGIERO
PROP STYLING BY **LINDEN ELSTRAN**

Glance around your local spirits shop and you'll see that today's gins exceed the expectations of their category. Sure, classic London Dry and spirit-forward Navy Strength gins will always have a place on bar shelves, but the category's growth over the past decade rewards curious drinkers.

In the early aughts, craft distillers appeared on the scene, rethinking traditional styles and propelling the creations of new expressions. Juniper, gin's primary flavor component, was toned down, creating an opportunity to explore a swath of flavorful botanicals and ushering in a new era of experimentation. Today these softer profiles make gin a favorite for modern cocktailing, as they play better with other ingredients and taking on a less abrasive role in drinks.

These new varieties are made around the globe, from Kenya to Vietnam, each featuring ingredients endemic to the regions in which they're made. Producers take big swings with unexpected botanicals like earthy eucalyptus, zesty green turmeric, and floral, fragrant mangosteen, a fruit native to Southeast Asia.

The result: intoxicating spirits—this one smoky, that one ingeniously tinged with mandarin—that push the boundaries of what gin can be. Whether you're sipping them on the rocks, sensing the whisper of tea leaves, or mixing up your next martini, here are six beguiling gins to try.

PROCERA BLUE DOT

(Nairobi, Kenya)

ZESTY | SPICED | EARTHY

Procera sources botanicals from across the African continent to produce a gin with a sense of place. The draw is a unique variety that grows mainly in the Kenyan highlands, the namesake *Juniperus procera,* which evokes an earth and spice quality that complements an aroma less green and sharp on the palate as its Euro counterparts.

FOUR PILLARS OLIVE LEAF

(Healesville, Australia)

SAVORY | RICH | VEGETAL

A deeply savory expression, Four Pillar's Olive Leaf gin skews toward herbaceous flavors like rosemary, bay leaf, and olive oil. Dried olive leaves impart a verdant brightness. It all comes together to make what very well could be the best dirty martini of your life. Add vermouth and all the salty, savory olive brine you'd like.

KOMASA

(Kagoshima, Japan)

CITRIC | SILKY | CLEAN

While other gins feature a long list of botanicals, Komasa's includes just three: juniper, coriander, and Sakurajima komikan mandarins. These small citrus fruits grow at the base of the nearby volcano, Sakurajima, and lend a zippy citrus note to the spirit. The base spirit is shochu, distilled from rice, which imparts a distinctly velvety texture to the bright gin.

PROUDLY EST. 2013
FOUR PILLARS
OLIVE LEAF
GIN
BATCH DISTILLED IN THE YARRA VALLEY FROM AUSTRALIAN OLIVE LEAF & OLIVE OIL
43.8% ALC./VOL. 750ml
KOMASA GIN
Fresh Notes, Refined Tones
SAKURAJIMA KOMIKAN
Made with the World's Smallest Satsumas, Mandarins Harvested in Southern Japan.
49% alc/vol JAPANESE CRAFT GIN 375ml
DISTILLED IN KAGOSHIMA JAPAN
KOMASA JYOZO CO., LTD.
小正
ジン
薩摩
小蜜柑

GUILDER'S RED OOLONG

(US)

AROMATIC | MUSKY | RIPE

The magic of Guilders lies in the red oolong tea sourced from the renowned Taitung region in Taiwan, steeped and distilled here in the States. The final product is quite a statement: a mahogany brown spirit that's aromatic and bold, balancing flavors of berries, cherries, and chocolate, that insists you drink it in a Negroni, or straight, like whiskey.

SONG CAI FLORAL GIN

(Hanoi, Vietnam)

LIGHT | TROPICAL | RESTRAINED

In Song Cai's floral expression, founder and master distiller Daniel Nguyen works with local farmers to harvest botanicals from Vietnam's northern highlands, including five unique flower blossoms. The perfumed notes are calibrated and restrained so that the blossoms underpin more familiar flavors like punchy, piney juniper and juicy pomelo peel.

ABROJO ALIVIO AL ALMA

(Santiago Matatlán, Mexico)

SMOKY | EARTHY | FLORAL

Made in the heart of mezcal country, Abrojo gin is fermented with wild yeast and spent agave by-products from master distiller Gonzalo Martinez's mezcal production, along with local botanicals like hoja santa, guava peel, and alligator juniper, an indigenous variety grown in areas of Mexico and as far north as Texas and Arizona.

GUILDER'S
RED OOLONG
DRY GIN MADE WITH TAIWANESE TEA LEAVES
DISTILLED IN THE UNITED STATES CONCEIVED BY TEA-MASTERS CRAFTED USING TOURNAMENT-GRADE TEA LEAVES
43% ALC/VOL · 700ml
SÔNG CÁI
VIỆT NAM
FLORAL GIN
45% ALC/VOL.
700ml
GIN
ABROJO
ALIVIO AL ALMA
SELECCIÓN Y MEZCLA DE NUESTRA HERBOLARIA MEXICANA
750 ML
45% ALC BY VOL.

LIQUID BOTANY

JUNIPER is the botanical berry (and flavor profile) that ties all gins together. In order to be classified as gin, the spirit's most prominent flavor must be piney, cool juniper.

◆

SAKURAJIMA KOMIKAN mandarins, clocking in at a teeny 4 centimeters, are grown in the Kagoshima Prefecture in Japan. Its fragrant peels are the one of just three botanicals which flavor the cleverly simple Komosa brand.

◆

You won't find **BAY LEAF OR MACADAMIA NUT** in many traditional gin formulations, but they add a distinct herbal, earthy note and a silky, rich texture, respectively, to Four Pillars Olive Leaf Gin.

◆

The **EUCALYPTUS AND BASIL** used to make Abrojo aren't traditional gin botanicals, but they lend the alluring, smoky spirit a soft, herbal flavor.

◆

HOJA SANTA is native to Mexico and South America but also grows in the southern United States. In Abrojo, its peppery anise flavor is integral to the spirit's depth and complexity.

◆

Pomelos are native to Southeast Asia, and the diễn variety grows in North Vietnam, where Song Cai is produced. The gin uses **DIỄN POMELO FLOWERS**, one of the sweetest varieties, to impart a pleasant citrus flavor.

◆

MÁC MÂT fruit is used frequently in Vietnamese cooking, but less so in spirit making. In Song Cai's floral gin, mác mât supports the minty pine of the juniper with a sweet, sour flavor similar to sumac.

SAKE-GRAPEFRUIT FIZZ

6 SERVINGS

This light and highly drinkable cocktail—which pairs the bittersweet flavor of grapefruit with sparkling sake and a bold gin like those featured here—is best when served very cold. Keep your gin, sake, and sparkling water in the fridge until you're ready to assemble and serve.

¼	cup sugar
3	oz. chilled gin
2	oz. fresh grapefruit juice
1	oz. fresh lemon juice
	Kosher salt
12	oz. chilled sparkling sake, divided
	Chilled sparkling water (for serving)
6	grapefruit twists

Heat sugar and ¼ cup water in a small saucepan over medium, stirring constantly, until sugar is dissolved, about 1 minute. Let simple syrup cool.

Vigorously stir gin, grapefruit juice, lemon juice, simple syrup, and a large pinch of salt in a tall glass to combine. Divide among 6 ice-filled rocks glasses and pour 2 oz. sake into each. Top off with sparkling water and garnish each cocktail with a grapefruit twist.

DO AHEAD: Simple syrup can be made 1 month ahead. Transfer to an airtight container; cover and chill.

GIN'S LEGACY

Gin as we know it is effectively the great-grandchild of genever, a Dutch spirit flavored with juniper. The Dutch word for juniper, *genever*, was shortened in English to gen, and then, eventually, to gin.

Dry gin is generally accepted as the standard style for the spirit, but there are several other widely crafted styles. Navy Strength gin, for example, boasts a higher alcohol by volume, while Old Tom gin is a sweeter formulation that dates back to the 18th century.

The martini, perhaps gin's most famous cocktail, has murky origins. Many claim it arrived on the heels of the Martinez, a cocktail made with gin, sweet vermouth, maraschino, and bitters, in the mid-19th century.

NEXT-GEN PIZZA

BY ELAZAR SONTAG

FROM NEAPOLITAN-STYLE PIES WITH MEXICAN FLAVORS TO NEW YORK SLICES LOADED WITH OXTAILS, CHEFS ARE RESHAPING PIZZA THROUGH THEIR CULTURES.

An eager crowd gathered to celebrate Hapa Pizza's opening in 2023. While great pizza abounds in the Pacific Northwest, the Beaverton, Oregon, restaurant took a novel approach. Its light, char-spotted crust resembled a classic Neapolitan but was adorned with toppings like tender brisket and pho broth cooked into a heady reduction. Thanks to a constellation of creative chefs combining cuisines and regional influences, pizza culture across the US is evolving.

You'll find warmly spiced Bengali beef pizza in Plano, Texas, and pies served with al pastor and a sidecar of pineapple in Cleveland, Mississippi. Our cultural obsession with dough reached a fever pitch during the pandemic and "brought new pizza makers from non-Italian or non-white backgrounds into the game," according to Adam Kuban, a writer who has been making pizza and documenting its evolution for over two decades. Many of the pizzerias on this list are led by chefs who taught themselves to make dough at home during the pandemic, experimenting with flour blends, hydration levels, and baking temperatures until they liked their results. They mix styles and moonlight as structural engineers to ensure their crusts hold up the heft of elote, khao soi, or fried chicken.

The latitude for this sort of quirk and creativity has only proven a recent possibility for many chefs. With craft pizza now widely available across America, diners are trained to know the good stuff when they see it. As people in major cities and small towns show an appetite for new pizza styles, and social media makes it easier to reach a target audience, chefs have a clear blueprint for success. "When I think back 15 years, I can't imagine Boogy & Peel being able to exist," Rachael Jennings says. At her DC pizzeria, which opened in 2022, she makes cheeky pies inspired by deli sandwiches and iconic fast-food items. "People are feeling more comfortable, a little bit more bold with what we're willing to put on a pizza."

HAPA PIZZA CO-OWNER NATALIE TRUONG IN ACTION.

PIZZA
RED NEAPOLITAN PIZZA

THE TRUE LOVE LANGUAGE

HAPA PIZZA, BEAVERTON, OR

Hapa Pizza is an extension of Aaron and Natalie Truong's relationship. While Aaron grew up on a steady diet of his parents' Chinese and Vietnamese cooking as a first-generation American, pizza was a childhood staple for Natalie, whose family has lived in America for generations. "When we got married, I wanted to learn how to make pizza for her because that's something that she loved," says Aaron, who had no prior cooking experience. He blended flours to bridge the textural gap between a Neapolitan and New York–style dough, creating an airy, golden crust. Instead of adhering to the flavors of a single culture, Hapa encompasses an array of Asian cuisines. One of the most popular pizzas is an ode to the banh mi Aaron ate after church as a kid. The sandwich is gloriously transformed into a pizza strewn with strips of pickled daikon and carrots, lemongrass-marinated pork, and the requisite squeeze of sriracha-spiked aioli. | *previous photo: Michael Raines*

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:
FORMING THE TENDER BASE FOR ANANAS'S CREATIVE PIZZA; LEÑA'S AL PASTOR SPECIAL; A BIG MAC–INSPIRED PIE COMPLETE WITH PICKLES AND "SPECIAL SAUCE."

A SLICE OF NOSTALGIA

ANANAS PIZZERIA, SEATTLE

Khampaeng Panyathong has never been to New York, which has a liberating effect. "I'm definitely not trying to do any New York–style pizza," the chef says. Instead, he creates pies that reflect his path from a refugee camp in Thailand to Seattle, where his family relocated in 1987. His tribute to their native Laos is a pie laced with khao-soi-spiced pork and umami-rich lardons cured in a mixture of garlic and sticky rice. Another, inspired by the iconic chicken bake loved by Costco fans, is topped with bacon, chives, and a drizzle of Caesar dressing. Panyathong blends up to four flours to achieve a crust that is foldable and puffy around the perimeter, with the subtle sweetness of the chain pizzas he coveted as a kid. Even now, Panyathong prefers the mellow plushness of a Domino's or Pizza Hut to the chew and crunch of a New York slice. "That's why my pizza is soft and tender," he says. "It brings back nostalgia." | *photo: Kyle Johnson*

NEAPOLITAN'S NEXT CHAPTER

LEÑA PIZZA + BAGELS, CLEVELAND, MS

Like many tourists, Rory and Marisol Doyle fell in love with pizza in Naples. In 2023 the husband-wife duo opened their own pizzeria in Cleveland, Mississippi, a city of about 10,000 in the heart of the Delta. "In the beginning there was a little bit of skepticism," says Marisol, who leads the kitchen. With no nearby Neapolitan pizzerias, diners weren't accustomed to the wood-fired crust and pools of low-moisture mozzarella she had worked to perfect. As people warmed to her style, it gave the chef room to grow. Some of her most dynamic pies now call back to her childhood in Sonora, Mexico. She festoons them with tender pulled pork and bright homemade salsa roja or smoky chorizo and roasted potatoes. As word spreads, diners travel across the state to try the unique pies transforming Cleveland into a pizza destination. | *photo: Rory Doyle*

SERIOUSLY PLAYFUL PIZZA

BOOGY & PEEL, WASHINGTON, DC

There's a streak of humor coursing through chef Rachael Jennings's pizzeria. One particularly popular pie is inspired by the McDonald's Big Mac, complete with well-browned and judiciously seasoned ground beef, pinkish "special sauce," a deluge of iceberg lettuce, and gooey American cheese on a light but sturdy crust—all that's missing is the sesame seed bun. The young chef has a proclivity for rich flavors and jokey combinations, but her culinary rigor shines through in mash-ups like a Reuben-ified number sporting pastrami, sharp sauerkraut, and an ingenious pinch of caraway powder to mimic rye bread. "There's definitely some people who come in with a much more traditionalist mindset, and they're like, 'What the hell is this?'" Jennings says. "There's plenty of those people that we can win over if I can get them to stick around and actually try one of the pies." | *photo: Kimberly Kong/ NOM Digital*

Cuts & Slices Pizzeria
SMILE, YOU'RE ON CAMERA
DO NOT ENTER NO ENTRAR
DO NOT ENTER

ASHLEE MCLAREN HAND-DELIVERS AN ORDER.

NEW YORK'S NEW SLICE

CUTS & SLICES, NEW YORK

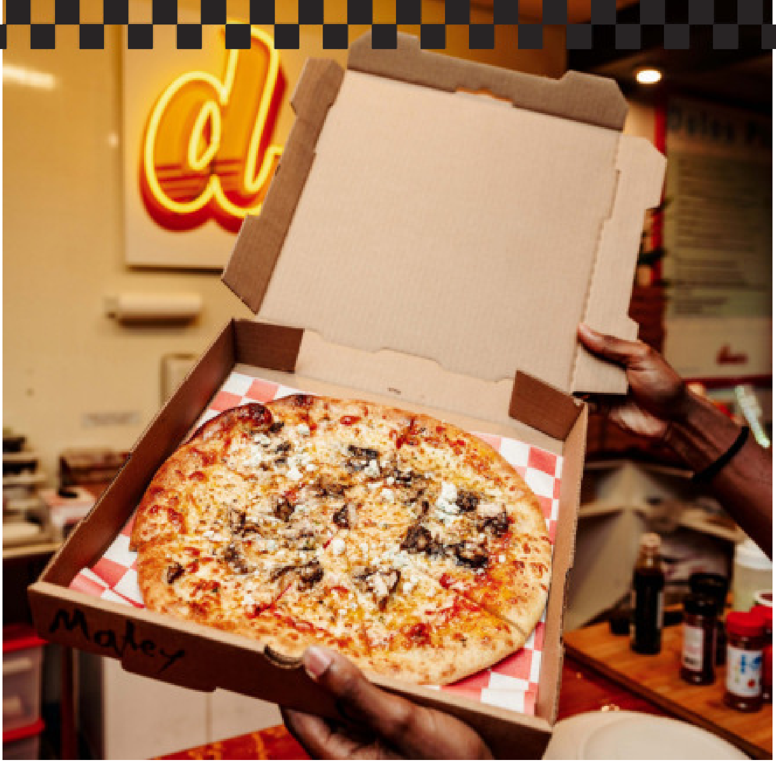
In a city of at least 1,000 pizzerias, Randy and Ashlee Mclaren knew they'd have to break through a lot of noise. At Cuts & Slices, which the couple opened in 2018 in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant, pizzas reference the many foods New Yorkers turn to for comfort and convenience. An early hit was a decadent chopped cheese pie topped with ground beef, onions, peppers, and a drizzle of sriracha ketchup. Others are inspired by Randy's Trinidadian background and Ashlee's Southern roots, featuring shrimp stained with yellow curry powder or bits of craggy fried chicken and chunks of waffle. On a whim one day, Randy put on a pot of brown stew oxtails, gingerly deboned them by hand after eight hours, and blanketed a pizza in the sweet, sticky mixture. On Instagram, the pie went mega-viral and the shop's success snowballed. Three locations and nearly half a million social media followers later, Cuts & Slices has opened the floodgates for chefs to do pizza their way. "You're seeing so many more people starting to use pizza as a canvas," Randy says. "You can create your own style." | *photos: Elliott Jerome Brown Jr.*

THE HAWAIIAN
CURRY OXTAIL
TERIYAKI OXTAIL

FLAVOR MAXIMALISM

DOLO'S PIZZA, ATLANTA

The concept for this Caribbean-inflected pizzeria can be traced to a trip Yusef Walker took to Jamaica, where the chef happened upon a pizza shop owned by an Italian expat. "It was the best food that I had on that entire trip," says Walker, whose parents hail from the island nation. A few years later, when a pizzeria behind his Atlanta home went out of business, it felt like a sign. He taught himself to bake from cookbooks and instructional videos, and by the time Dolo's opened in 2022 he had developed a winning dough made with local flour and fermented for at least two days. A zingy charcoal pesto forms the ink-black base for a pie interspersed by bright pops of blistered tomato. On others, Walker nods to his Jamaican and Cuban heritage with morsels of jerk chicken and caramelized lobes of plantain. He offers equally inspired add-ons that include pomegranate molasses, plantain chips, and local honey, encouraging diners to create their own pizzas and "take themselves away on a little adventure." | *photo: Anitra Isler*



CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT:
SAUCEBROS' PESTO IS BRIGHT WITH CILANTRO AND CASHEWS; JERK CHICKEN AND CRUMBLES OF BLUE CHEESE MEET ON THE MATEY; NO TIME TO LET SUPERKHANA'S CHILE CHEESE NAAN COOL.

THE CULTURAL AMBASSADORS

SAUCEBROS PIZZA, PLANO, TX

Some Bangladeshi chefs in the US label their food as Indian, hoping to reach an audience unfamiliar with their cuisine. When Redwan Huda and Labib Tarafdar set out to open a pizzeria in 2022, the two friends took a different tack. "We're trying to put our culture on the map," Huda says. To develop the toppings for their proudly Bangladeshi pizzas, the two home cooks, both born in the capital city of Dhaka, turned to cooking videos on YouTube. They spent the pandemic fine-tuning toppings that include balachao, a powerful fermented shrimp paste that brings an otherwise tame mozzarella pie roaring to life. They cook with pungent mustard oil and top their three-day-fermented crust with cilantro pesto, beef slow-cooked with garam masala, and mushrooms sautéed in ghee. Spurred by a warm reception to their initial concept, they created new pies inspired by Korean barbecue, beef tacos, and Alfredo pasta. "Why restrict ourselves with just Bengali flavors?" Huda figured. "Let's do more." | *photo: Desiree Rios*

GENRE-BENDING PIES

SUPERKHANA INTERNATIONAL, CHICAGO

The chile cheese naan at Superkhana International sure looks like pizza, a golden ring of crust encircling an expanse of caramelized mozzarella and Amul cheese. Then again, the restaurant's seasonally inspired pizzas carry the faint but unmistakable tang of naan. "Sometimes we call it a pizza, sometimes we call it a naan," says Zeeshan Shah, who opened Superkhana International with his friend Yoshi Yamada in 2019. At their lighthearted, globe-trotting Indian restaurant, blurred lines lead to culinary revelations. Their salty, yogurt-rich dough is topped with dill-packed beef keema and folded into calzones bursting with butter chicken. Even the unassuming tomato sauce spread across a Margherita pizza is rendered hauntingly deep and savory thanks to a bit of tomato achar. The response from Chicago diners has been overwhelmingly positive, but none matters more to the chefs than that of older South Asian diners who come in for dinner with their families. As they walk the dining room, the pair sometimes catch aunties taking their first approving bites, Shah says, "which is pretty big for us." | *photo: Evan Jenkins*

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You'll want extra naan to sop up this slow-cooked, spice-packed short rib braise. P. 65

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Last Call

A little something to sip on from Bon Appétit's vast archives.

PORNSTAR MARTINI

RECIPE BY GABE BERGADO
PHOTOGRAPH BY ISA ZAPATA

One fun thing about the late 1980s and '90s—besides parachute pants and the sartorial choices on *Seinfeld*—was that most cocktails served in a martini glass would be dubbed a martini, even if they bore little to no resemblance to the original. Those years were a boon for the genre, with the inventions of the French martini (vodka, pineapple juice, and Chambord), the espresso martini (espresso, vodka, and Kahlúa), and the breakfast martini (gin, Cointreau, lemon juice, and orange marmalade).

In that vein, the pornstar martini splashed onto the scene in 2002. Late London bartender Douglas Ankrah created the passion-fruit-forward cocktail, and it was quickly enshrined as a modern classic. To this day it's one of the most popular drinks in the UK.

The drink is playful and sophisticated, marrying the tartness of passion fruit purée and Passoã liqueur with vanilla vodka and sugar. Some bartenders add sparkling wine for a fizzy lift—the original recipe calls for a sidecar. We love a twofer. —*Sam Stone*

Combine **1½ oz. passion fruit purée**, **1½ oz. vanilla vodka**, **½ oz. Passoã (passion fruit liqueur)**, **¼ oz. fresh lime juice**, **1 tsp. sugar**, and **⅛ tsp. vanilla extract** in a cocktail shaker. Add ice; cover and shake until outside of shaker is frosty, about 15 seconds. Strain into a martini or coupe glass. Serve with a side of **sparkling wine (such as cava or prosecco)**. *Makes 1*

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FOOD STYLING BY PEARL JONES. PROP STYLING BY TIM FERRO.

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